

# InterPark

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## Celebrating 125 years of Blackpool Pleasure Beach

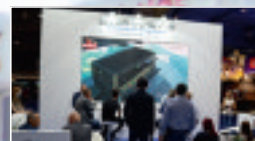
**22** Waterpark news



**32** Walt Disney  
World's  
50th anniversary



**36** IAAPA  
Expo Europe



**Open to Question**  
Ken Whiting,  
Whiting's Foods

**The Ride to Happiness**  
from Mack opens at  
Plopsaland de Panne

**Park Life**  
Yas Waterworld,  
Abu Dhabi



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## Time to hand over the editor's reins

Andrew Mellor **Editor**

OVER 42 years ago – September 13, 1979, to be exact – I began my career in journalism – but now it's time for a change, so this will be my last issue of InterPark as editor.

It all began when I joined the family business based here in the UK as an editorial assistant. The company was the World's Fair Ltd. and we published a weekly newspaper of the same name which, among other sectors, covered the fairground and amusement park industry in the UK.

As I've mentioned once or twice before in this column, during the two or three months prior to this I had worked as a ride operator at Blackpool Pleasure Beach to gain an insight into this side of the business and coincidentally, my first reporting assignment just a few weeks later was to cover the opening of the Water Chute ride at the park.

My time at World's Fair witnessed many memorable occasions, one of which was as co-founder and editor of what I believe was the first full colour monthly magazine for the worldwide amusement and theme park industry, Park World, in 1985.

Over the past four decades my reporting and editing roles have allowed me to literally travel the world, visiting parks and manufacturers and suppliers, attending and reporting on trade shows and conferences and taking part in a whole host of other events and gatherings, meeting some amazing individuals in the process and making many, many friends within the industry.

There are an incredible number of memories that come with over 40 years in the same business. Obviously among the highlights have been the 37 IAAPA trade shows I've attended and reported on in the US, many of these when the show used to move around to different cities before finding its forever home in Orlando. Another major highlight was several trips driving around Europe visiting parks and ride manufacturers, one such trip in the 80s seeing me spend a weekend travelling to Italy. Having driven all day on the Saturday, it took 12 hours on the Sunday to go from Waldkirch in southern Germany (where I'd met up with Mack's Kurt Mack-Even for dinner the evening before) to the home of train manufacturer Dotto in Castelfranco Veneto in northern Italy, from where I made my way back to the UK stopping to visit other companies and parks along the way. What a trip that was – and all in a pretty basic company vehicle of the time?

Similar adventures followed over the years while of course mixed in with all the hard work have been numerous, more social occasions when I've had the opportunity to enjoy the company of industry colleagues over a beer or two (!), such as on group park visits, summer conferences, at official dinners and on the golf course. Putting it simply, I've thoroughly enjoyed the hard work, the networking and socialising and the general camaraderie the industry has provided and I've been very lucky to have done so.

In addition to my role as editor of InterPark I have also worked in other areas of the business for the past 25 years or so, providing PR and marketing services to manufacturers and suppliers, organising conferences and events and, more latterly, as secretary of the UK ride inspectors trade association NAFLIC. I plan to continue with these latter activities so will remain involved in the business which has given me so much opportunity, but the journalistic/editor side of things will cease.

Writing about the industry over all these years has obviously been a huge part of my life and I thank every single person who has helped me compile articles for their time, assistance, much valued input, knowledge and expertise as I've carried out research and done interviews. It's been a truly amazing journey.

**6** World news

**8** Europe news

**12** Middle East news

**14** US news

**18** Asia news

**21** China news

**22** Waterpark news

**28** Legacy Entertainment and Lotte World reach 10 year milestone

**32** Feature  
Celebrating Walt Disney World's 50th anniversary

**36** Show report  
IAAPA Expo Europe

**44** Feature  
125 years of Blackpool Pleasure Beach

**48** Project profile  
The Ride to Happiness, Plopsaland de Panne

**54** Open to Question  
Ken Whiting, Whiting's Foods

**57** Park Life  
Yas Waterworld, Abu Dhabi

**60** Dennis Spiegel looks at ...  
the labour market and attracting young people to work in parks

Supporters of:



## Calendar

### November 10–11

Family Attraction Expo 2021, NEC Birmingham, UK  
Contact: 4 Colston Ave., Bristol, BS1 2NT, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)117 930 4927  
www.familyattractionexpo.co.uk

### November 16–19

IAAPA Expo, Orange County Convention Centre, Orlando, Florida, USA  
Contact: International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, 4155 West Taft Vineland Road, Orlando, Florida, USA  
Tel: +1 321 319 7600  
Fax: +1 321 319 7690  
Email: iaapa@IAAPA.org  
www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo

### November 30– December 2

MAPIC, Palais des Festivals, Cannes, FRANCE  
Contact: Reed MIDEM, 27 Quai Alphonse Le Gallo, CS 10026 Boulogne, FRANCE  
Tel: +33 179 71 95 15  
Email: Daniela.jakovljevic@reedmidem.com  
www.mapic.com

## 2022

### January 11–13

EAG 22, Entertainment, Attractions and Gaming International Expo, ExCel London, UK  
Contact: Swan Events, Gainsborough House, 15 High Street, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 2RT, UK  
www.eagexpo.com

### February 3–5

Atrax '22 9th International Amusement – Attraction, Park – Recreation Industry and Services Exhibition. Istanbul Expo Centre, Istanbul, TURKEY  
Contact: Tureks International Fairs Co.  
Tel: +90 212 570 63 05  
Email: nergis@tureksfuar.com.tr  
www.tureksfuar.com.tr

### March 26–28

CAE Beijing 2022, China International Exhibition Centre, Shunyi New Venue, Beijing, CHINA  
Contact: Katie Wang, L&A International Ltd., 6 Penmere Grove, Sale, Cheshire, M33 4FP, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)161 610 0022  
Email: katie.w@chinaattractionsexpo.org  
www.chinaattractionsexpo.org

### March 28–30

DEAL 2022, Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE  
Contact: International Expo-Consults (IEC)  
Tel: +971 4 343 5777  
Email: deal@iecduhai.com  
www.dealmiddleeastshow.com

### March 30– April 1

RAAPA Expo 2022  
Pavilion 55, VDNH, Moscow, RUSSIA  
Contact: RAAPA  
Tel: +7 495 234 5233  
Email: raapa@raapa.ru  
www.raapa.ru

### May 10–12

2022 Asia Amusement & Attractions Expo (AAA) China Import and Export Fair Complex (Area A)  
Contact: Tina Chang, Guangdong Grandeur International Group  
Tel: +86 20 221 06418  
Email: sales@grandeurhk.com

### June 8–10

IAAPA Expo Asia, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong SAR, CHINA  
Contact: International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, 4155 West Taft Vineland Road, Orlando, Florida, USA  
Tel: +1 321 319 7600  
Fax: +1 321 319 7690  
Email: iaapa@IAAPA.org  
www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo-asia

### June 29–July 1

9th Events and Amusement Expo Tokyo, Makuhari Messe, Tokyo, JAPAN  
Contact: Reed Exhibitions Japan Ltd.  
Tel: +813 3349 8510  
Email: eventexpo.eng@reedexpo.co.jp  
www.eventexpo.jp/en-gb.html

### September 13–15

IAAPA Expo Europe  
Contact: International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, 4155 West Taft Vineland Road, Orlando, Florida, USA  
Tel: +1 321 319 7600  
Fax: +1 321 319 7690  
Email: iaapa@iaapa.org  
www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo-europe

 Additional copies of **InterPark** distributed at these events.

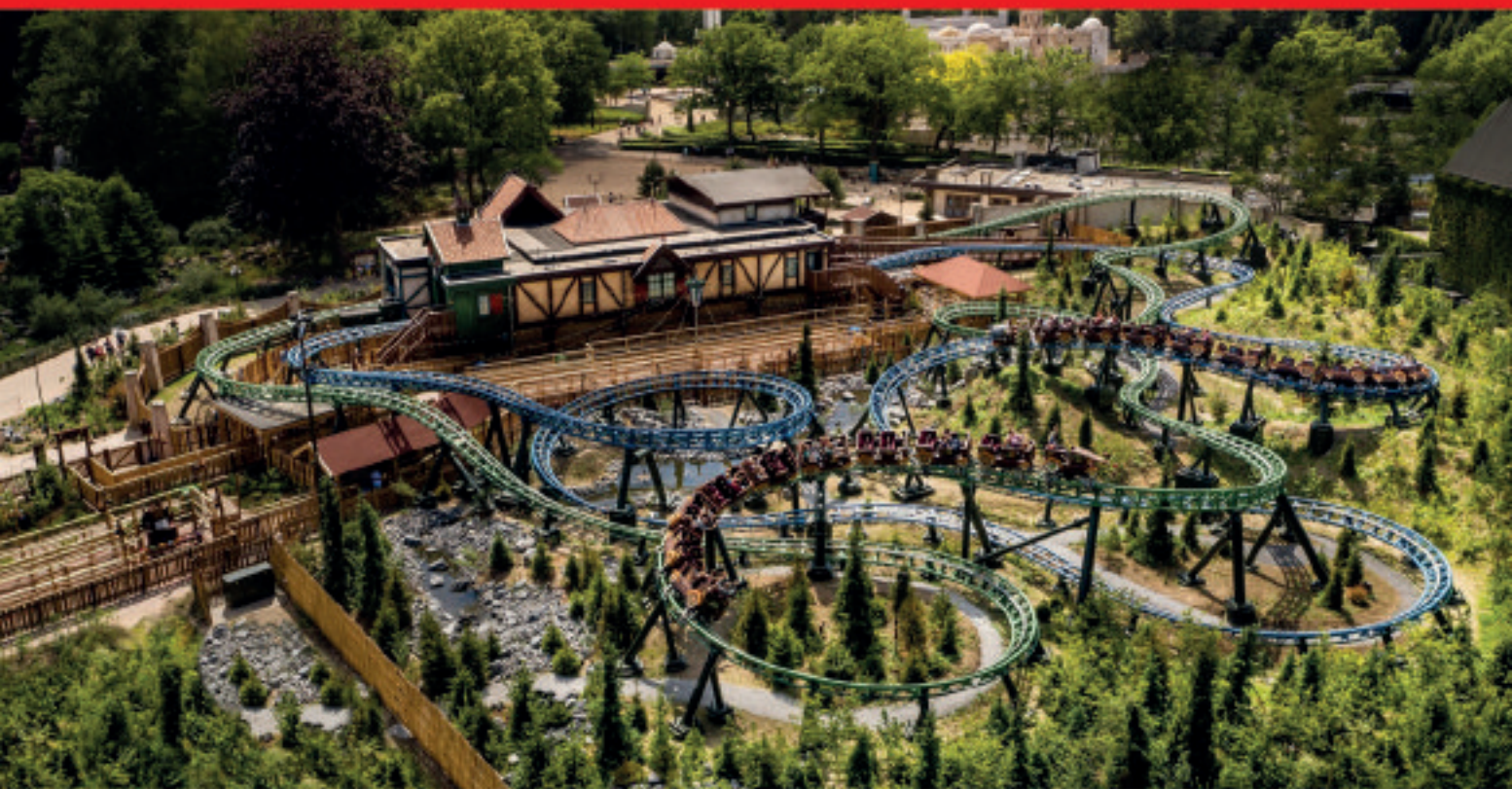
As dates sometimes change, please check with organisers before visiting international trade events.

Atrax '22 9th International Amusement – Attraction, Park – Recreation Industry and Services Exhibition is due to take place from February 3 to 5 next year at the Istanbul Expo Centre in Turkey





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## IAAPA names Jakob Wahl executive vice-president and COO

IAAPA has announced Jakob Wahl has been appointed executive vice-president and chief operating officer.

The position will be effective from November 1, 2021. In his new role, Wahl will lead operations of IAAPA's regional offices, global sales and three worldwide Expo events, as well as member events. He

will also oversee the recruitment and onboarding of the association's new vice-president and executive director of IAAPA EMEA.

Wahl has worked for IAAPA for nine years. He was initially employed as programme manager, which he worked as for four years in the association's Brussels office. He then moved to Europa-Park in Germany, where he was director of communications. Wahl returned to IAAPA in 2017 as vice-president and executive director of IAAPA Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA).

Hal McEvoy, president and CEO of IAAPA, commented on the appointment, saying: "Jakob is a dedicated and passionate leader who has increased membership and consistently expanded attendance and participation in the EMEA region's events, including IAAPA Expo Europe."

"As IAAPA and the attractions industry emerge from the impact of the global pandemic, Jakob is the right person at the right time to help us better serve our global members, understand the varying needs of our regions and help the association move forward to meet its goals."

## Attendance at world's top theme parks down 67 per cent in 2020

ATTENDANCE at the top 25 most visited theme parks in the world decreased by 67 per cent from 2019 to 2020.

The findings were unveiled by the Themed Entertainment Association (TEA) and AECOM's Theme Index global attendance report. TEA and AECOM reported attendance of 83.1m at 2019's top 25 theme parks during 2020, down from 253.7m in the previous year.

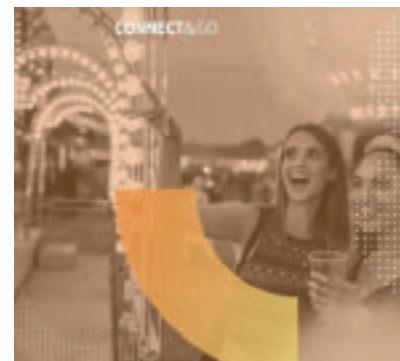
Leading the world's theme park attendance figures with 6.9m guests was Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom. Having been closed from March to July in 2020, attendance figures were down nearly 67 per cent from 2019's 20.9m visitors.

Commenting on the findings of the report, the authors wrote: "Park closures as well as the loss of international and domestic tourists varied from country to country creating a patchwork of performance worldwide in 2020."

"Accordingly, 2020's attendance is largely a function of regulatory agency restrictions limiting parks' operating days and capacities and not park popularity and management. Therefore, we have decided to keep our 2019 rankings in place for our 2020 report. This will be re-ranked in 2021 once global health conditions stabilise."



## Global attractions deploy Connect&GO's virtual wallet Konnect



CONNECT&GO has announced seven attractions across the globe have deployed its virtual wallet.

Within just a few months, several million users are now experiencing Connect&GO's virtual wallet technology known as Konnect. One attraction using the technology is Fabrikus World, the largest fixed fairground in France. The 17.3 acre park delegated its digital transformation to the European subsidiary of Connect&GO, which introduced an online ticketing platform and cashless payments to the digital conversion of the park.

Another attraction to implement Konnect is Interzip Rogers. Crossing the Ottawa River between Ontario and Quebec, Interzip Rogers is the world's first interprovincial zipline. The Konnect platform is also present at Mega Parc des Galeries de la Capitale, one of the largest family parks in Canada, which has introduced omnichannel ticketing, smart wristbands and more.

Other sites to have recently deployed the technology include the Nerf Challenge in Dallas and Granby Zoo. The virtual wallet technology is also being made available at Baie de Beauport, the beach in Quebec City at Domaine du Radar and at Intencité, the largest recreational complex in Canada.

Dominic Gagnon, president of Connect&GO, commented: "After a challenging year with COVID-19, we are very happy to see the enthusiasm for our technology and expect very rapid growth over the next year."

## Melissa Ruminot named president-elect of TEA



MELISSA Ruminot has been named president-elect of the Themed Entertainment Association (TEA), the international non-profit association that represents leading creators, developers, designers and producers of experiences and places around the world.

Ruminot will officially begin her tenure as president in November 2022, when she will assume the role held by the current international board president, Chuck Fawcett. The decision to elect Ruminot was made by a unanimous vote of TEA's international board during the organisation's August board meeting.

During the next 15 months, she will continue to serve on the executive committee, as well as playing a leading part in the international board's forthcoming board planning meeting in Chicago.

Commenting on the appointment, Chuck Fawcett said: "I am confident that Melissa is the right leader to carry the TEA into new era of growth. She is extremely strategic with unmatched attention to detail and has been an exemplary leader for many years as the Eastern Division president, chair of the executive director selection committee and most recently in covering operational responsibilities at headquarters during a period of staff transition."

Ruminot shared her excitement for starting the role, saying: "Understanding the priorities of our global membership is critically important to the health of our organisation and will influence its overall strategy going forward."

## Merlin renews partnership with sustainability specialist Ramco

MAINTAINING a commitment to a circular economy, Merlin Entertainments has announced it has renewed its partnership with Ramco, specialists in the sale of surplus assets.

Since its founding in 1996, Ramco has been keeping products out of landfill by giving items a new lease of life. The eco-friendly company collects and prepares diverse products for resale, including electronic equipment, plant machinery, communication systems, vehicles and more. Merlin first partnered with Ramco in 2020, when the company began to provide a circular economy by rehoming redundant equipment at Legoland Windsor.

Speaking about the continued partnership, Helen Bull, divisional director at Legoland Windsor, said: "At Legoland Windsor we are committed to doing everything we can to run our park and hotels in the most sustainable way possible, which we know is as important to our guests as it is to us. Our relationship with Ramco allows items that we no longer need to be reused by others and is helping us streamline our business operations so we can be even more efficient.

"We are pleased to be renewing our partnership with Ramco and look forward to seeing their support expanded across the wider Merlin Group in the future," Bull added.



## NEWS IN BRIEF

**US** A two-night hotel experience will commence at Walt Disney World Resort on March 1, 2022. Known as Star Wars: Galactic Starcruiser, the experience will feature a cruise-style itinerary, enabling guests to embark on their own Star Wars adventure. During the experience visitors will travel aboard the luxury Halcyon starcruiser, equipped with stylish cabins set in exotic destinations.

**EUROPE** Disneyland Paris is to introduce a new accessibility programme designed to empower visitors with special needs and disabilities. The programme will enable guests to experience the park based on their own autonomy evaluation. It will be introduced on International Day of Persons with Disabilities, which is due to take place on December 3.

**MIDDLE EAST** A new aquarium has opened in the Mall of Dilmunia, home to entertainment, retail and dining on Dilmunia Island, Galali, Bahrain. The aquarium is cylindric in shape and showcases over 2,700 fish in what is the largest mall-based aquarium in the Middle East.

**WORLD** Simworx, designer and manufacturer of media based attractions, showcased its newest products in the company's portfolio, as well as recent project announcements, at IAAPA Expo Europe in Barcelona in September. The products included Simworx's new Alpine Racer VR attraction. Boasting a compact design that immerses guests in a high-speed alpine sledging experience, the attraction provides an affordable solution for smaller vendors.



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## HUSS Park Attractions announces new Break Dance 5

HUSS Park Attractions has launched a new addition to its product range – the Break Dance 5.

The innovative attraction follows in the footsteps of the company's original and highly successful Break Dance ride.

Break Dance 5 was launched at IAAPA Expo Europe, which took place in Barcelona in September. The design of the attraction is based on the "secret Break Dance formula," which was created for the original Break Dance ride.

The new attraction incorporates the HUSS Operator Centre Stage, with multi-media and special effects. The Operator Centre Stage is a new location for the operator, who becomes part of the "show," interacting with guests and taking full control of the entire ride experience.

The ride features a decagonal main disc, with a diameter of less than 18m. The main disc carries five cross-shaped gyros each with four gondolas, which have capacity for two passengers. The Break Dance 5 offers two rides in one attraction, with operators able to run two different sets of show ride cycles, six in total, to provide an all-inclusive family experience or a white knuckle thrill ride. A two lane queuing system optimises operation and guest flow.

Commenting on the addition of the Break Dance 5 to the company's portfolio of attractions, Mirko Schulze, CEO of HUSS, said: "The Break Dance has been a highlight of our product range for many years and our most successful ride to date. With the introduction of the Break Dance 5 we have brought the concept right up to date with a brand new design and a host of features that add further to an already very popular ride experience."

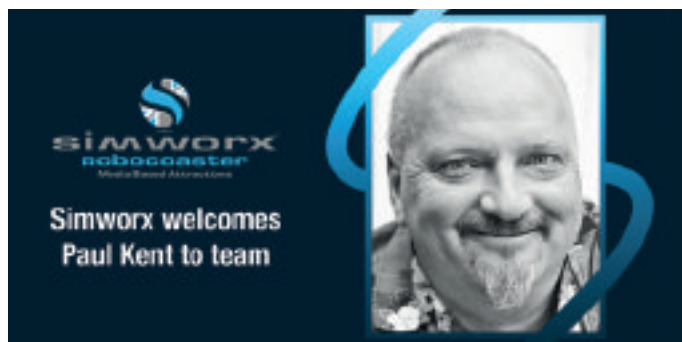
## Kent appointed global business development manager at Simworx

SIMWORX, the UK-based specialist in the design, development and manufacture of media based attractions, has appointed Paul Kent as the company's new global business development manager.

Kent has 20 years' experience working with audio-visual specialists Electrosonic and has been involved in the entertainment business from an early age. From designer to management levels, he has worked on projects around the world, some of which have won industry awards and much acclaim from millions of visitors.

Simworx's new global business development manager has also held the role of Europe and Middle East chairman of the Themed Entertainment Association and has been a member of the board of advisors for Experience UK.

Talking about the new position, Kent said: "I'm thrilled to begin the next chapter of my career with Simworx. They have a vast product range that I'm looking forward to getting acquainted with. Simworx is a company I have a lot of admiration for and I'm looking forward to showing everyone what they have to offer."



## IAAPA Foundation grants scholarship funding to Breda University



The IAAPA Foundation, dedicated to inspiring careers in the global attractions industry by cultivating leaders, has announced it has granted scholarship funding for two international students to attend Breda University of Applied Science in the Netherlands.

The decision to fund the students during the 2021 - 2022 and 2022 - 2023 academic years was made by the IAAPA Foundation board of directors.

Tom Wages, executive director of the IAAPA Foundation, commented on the funding, saying: "This funding is an expression of the support that the IAAPA Foundation board members have for the attractions management degree programme that Breda University offers and for Breda's demonstrated commitment to the attractions industry. The IAAPA Foundation is very pleased to play a role in Breda's efforts to support the attractions industry."

Breda University is renowned within the world of leisure and management. The university specialises in preparing students for international careers in different industries, including the attractions sector.

Jim Seay, chairman of the IAAPA Foundation and president of Premier Rides commented on the collaboration between the Foundation and Breda University. "The IAAPA Foundation has had a great relationship with Breda University for a good number of years," he said. "Their students have an amazing amount of passion for the global attractions industry and they literally light up the room when they participate in IAAPA Expo educational sessions and the Young Professionals Forums."

## Swiss start-up Smeetz partners with UK attraction destinations



**The Smeetz management team (from left to right) – Loris Savary, COO, Morgan Siffert CTO, Alexandre Martin, CEO, and Liza Tripet, CRO.**

SMEETZ, the Swiss-based company that provides intelligent ticketing and pricing solutions, has announced its first clients in the UK.

In what is the company's first contract in the UK, Smeetz is working with The Crocky Trail, the theme park located to the south of Liverpool. The Crocky Trail has been using Smeetz ticketing solutions since early May. The theme park's little brother, the Habberley Trail, has also adopted Smeetz's technology and has also been using the company's ticketing solutions for several months.

Entering the UK market is part of the company's international focus, with plans to enter multiple global markets by 2025. The start-up is well-established in Switzerland and has partnerships across Europe and in the UAE.

Smeetz was founded in 2017 to provide ticketing and pricing solutions based on artificial intelligence. The technology is aimed at helping clients increase their sales, optimise occupancy rates and automate pricing strategies.



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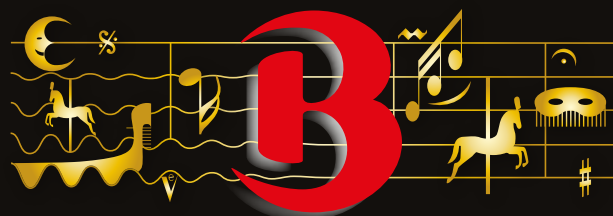
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## Halloween fun comes to Europa-Park

GERMANY'S largest theme park underwent a spooky makeover in October with the return of its Halloween event.

From October 2 to November 7, the park's 15 European themed areas were devoted to the scary season. Among the many sights and attractions was a post-apocalyptic world at Horror Nights – Traumatica. The themed areas were brought to life with an autumnal glow

and a sea of pumpkins, set aside 15,000 chrysanthemums, 6,000 corn plants and 3,000 bales of hay.

Visitors encountered many a spooky creature roaming around the park getting up to no good! Mischievous pirates voyaged on the Pirates in Batavia ride, as guests embarked on an adventure from Holland to Batavia, while visitors also enjoyed a bumpy soapbox race on the Madame Freudenreich Dino-Race VR attraction.

300 artists from around the world gathered at Europa-Park to join the Halloween entertainment, including ravenous vampires, dancing skeletons and creepy ice-skaters. Since 1998, Halloween has made up a big part of Europa-Park's events calendar, providing scary and magical fun for all the family.

## Maurer Rides introduces new interactive indoor ride

MAURER Rides, the German-based manufacturer and supplier of amusement rides, has introduced a new interactive indoor ride based on its Spike coaster technology.

The Maze experience challenges riders' reaction skills as they accelerate and brake for themselves around a labyrinth of challenges. The Maze features four zones, including the white Mystery Zone, which takes riders to mysterious spheres. The ride's three other zones also test riders' reactions. A blue laser signals riders to stop immediately. Those who reach the blue laser before it switches off are rewarded with an acceleration boost.

In the explosive Action Zone, red lasers slow users down. Failing to slow down enough results in a red flash hitting the rider, forcing them to slow down. In the foggy and toxic Yellow Haze Zone, yellow lasers provide additional speed if riders can manage to touch them.

The number of lasers and interactive elements can be changed and expanded as required by the Maze's operators. Combining light, fog and laser elements, the indoor ride fuses elements of gaming with virtual reality in a memorable maze experience.



## Framestore announces three new appointments



Eugénie von Tunzelmann



Lauren Anderson



Maximilian McNair MacEwan

FRAMSTORE, the creative studio offering visual effects, production, direction and post production services, has announced it has made three key promotions. The appointments are designed to cultivate company growth by solidifying a team of specialist experience.

Eugénie von Tunzelmann has been appointed to the newly created role of head of VFX, Attractions. Lauren Anderson and Maximilian McNair MacEwan join Heather Kinal as executive producers.

von Tunzelmann has worked at Framework since 2016. The company's new head of VFX Attractions has been involved in Film VFX for over 13 years and among her credits are *Interstellar* and *Man of Steel*. She has played an instrumental role in driving theme park projects, including the *Jurassic World Adventure* ride at Universal's new theme park, Universal Studios Beijing.

Anderson also joined Framestore in 2016, where she has been overseeing projects within the Framestore Labs department. These include the development and build of a unique brand studio for Ford within New York's Oculus building at the World Trade Centre.

McNair MacEwan has been at the company since 2017, where he has been pivotal in the delivery of immersive projects including attractions and experiences for Lionsgate Entertainment World, Universal Creative and Walt Disney Imagineering. As an executive producer, he will continue to manage the production workflow within the attractions team, as well as working on sales and strategy as the department continues to expand.

## Drusillas celebrates Shriek Week during October half-term



DRUSILLAS, the family theme park in Sussex, UK, was home to some spooky fun this October half-term, with the Shriek Week event.

Visitors to the much-loved venue enjoyed live action thrills, including a Drusillas' haunted house experience, Haunted Heights, Mummy Mayhem and a spooky invasion of the park's adventure maze. New to the 2021 Shriek Week event was the Sugar Skull Witch.

The venue's Discovery Centre was home to some creepy crawly encounters, with visitors meeting some real mini monsters, including millipedes, mealworms, cockroaches, locusts and even an Asian forest scorpion.

Ollie Smith, deputy managing director at Drusillas Park, commented on the return of the Halloween festival, saying: "Shriek Week last year was sandwiched between two national lockdowns and we weren't able to offer all our visitor favourites such as Haunted Heights, so we are thrilled to be back in full frightening force this year – with even more awful offerings!"



# Old Sydney Town Tourism Precinct

**Combining 14 unique tourism elements  
Creating a new destination for Australia's Cultural Tourism Industry**

World Village is the developer of the former Old Sydney Town Site located at the Gosford exit of the Pacific Highway, Somersby. With an area of 120 hectares, the future tourism precinct is surrounded by developed and thriving businesses and is just over one-hour drive to the Sydney CBD. The direct area is a high priority for Re-Development as identified in the Central Coast Regional Plan 2036. The site is also home to the famous Australian Reptile Park which will continue to operate and attract some 300,000 visitors annually.

The project will create **Australia's first comprehensive tourism industry precinct**, combining a wide range of tourism uses and experiences. Focusing on cultural tourism, recreation and entertainment, the precinct is forecast to attract visitation in excess of one million visitors per year from both the Sydney region and surrounding areas.



## Seeking Expressions of Interest from Operators and Investors

We are seeking tourism and entertainment operators and investors to join our Masterplan and showcase their offering within our Tourism and Entertainment Precinct. This may include operators of medium-sized theme parks, tourism entertainment projects, cultural attractions. As well as equipment manufacturers and creative designers around the globe.

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## Katapult signs agreement with Al Hokair Group



KATAPULT, international themed attraction designers, have signed an agreement with the Al Hokair Group, investors in the entertainment and hospitality industries.

The collaboration, which was agreed at the Saudi Entertainment and Amusement Expo, will see the firms work together on developing the strategy, design and guest experience of the next generation of themed attractions within the Al Hokair Group's portfolio.

Al Hokair Group currently has more than 92 entertainment centres and 35 hotels in its Middle East portfolio, which has been built up over five decades under Sheikh Abdulmohsin Alhokair's leadership.

Katapult's co-founder and CEO, Dawn Foote, commented on the partnership, saying: "We are delighted to work alongside Al Hokair to help them reimagine existing and create brand new themed attractions across the Middle East. Our working relationship over the last three years has been a joy and we're proud to formally agree our partnership in what is Katapult's 20<sup>th</sup> year in existence."

Mishal AlHokair, deputy CEO of entertainment at Al Hokair, shared his enthusiasm of the agreement, saying: "We are pleased to have this collaboration with Katapult, the organisation that continues to be relied upon by some of the largest IPs in the leisure and attractions industry, and we are sure that this collaboration will add a great value to our current and future projects."



## Epiq dark ride opens at indoor theme park in Qatar

QUEST indoor theme park in Qatar has announced the completion and soft opening of a new dark ride named Epiq.

The multi-launch Epiq is the world's tallest indoor coaster. The ride is highly themed and boasts special effects. Quest is located inside a five-star hotel at the

Doha Oasis, a luxury mixed-use development in Qatar. The development is home to a cutting-edge cinema, a prestigious French fashion department store and residences.

Epiq can be found in the Gravity area of the theme park, which is themed as a sci-fi spaceport. It is the world's first launch coaster with a fully integrated projection mapping tunnel to immerse riders into a story of augmented reality. Special effects and audio/visual show lighting add to the excitement of the ride. With a 60m tall twisted vertical spike, Epiq takes riders high above the park and features the fastest reverse launch in the world.

Epiq was designed by Premier Rides and company president Jim Seay commented: "We are extremely proud to have supplied this innovative and unique attraction to Quest theme park at Doha Oasis. We are honoured to be a part of Halul Real Estate Investment Company's formula for success by delivering this one-of-a-kind, record-breaking coaster that is sure to be a must-see attraction."

## Terra – The Sustainability Pavilion opens at Expo 2020 Dubai

CO-DESIGNED by the Eden Project, the ground-breaking visitor experience known as Terra – The Sustainability Pavilion has opened as part of Expo 2020 Dubai.

The experience is the first Eden-designed project to open outside the UK. Working alongside partners Thinc Design, Grimshaw and Expo 2020 Dubai, Eden Project International co-led the landscape design and visitor experience.

The Terra Pavilion, which features sustainable technologies including rotating "energy trees" and "water trees" that allow a passive method of dew harvesting, is being showcased at Expo 2020 Dubai. The event runs from October 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022.

The Dubai-based project is part of Eden Project International's worldwide expansion, as the group continues to develop attractions in China, Australia, Northern Ireland, New Zealand and Peru.

As David Harland, chief executive of Eden Project International, comments: "We are continuing to make progress on our international projects and we hope soon that we will be able to confirm funding for Eden Project North in Morecambe in Lancashire. We are also under construction in Qingdao in China and are working hard to make our other global projects a reality. We are very excited about the next few years."



## Ain Dubai becomes world's largest observation wheel

DUBBED the tallest and largest observation wheel in the world, Dubai was recently due to become home to an iconic new attraction that was due to open on October 21.

Known as Ain Dubai, meaning Dubai Eye in Arabic, the wheel stands at a height of 820ft, making it the tallest observation wheel in the world. The attraction will be the showpiece of Bluewaters Island, the artificial island which opened near the Dubai Marina in 2018.

The huge wheel features 48 enclosed cabins, some of which can accommodate up to 40 passengers. A total of 1,750 people can experience Ain Dubai at the same time. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, each cabin is currently restricted to a maximum of 10 people. Each ride lasts for 38 minutes.

The attraction offers 19 customisable experiences, including dining in the sky and exclusive celebration packages. Bespoke corporate and event packages are also available. The wheel will be open day and night, offering incredible, 360 degree views of the emirate's skyline.





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## IAAPA elects five new board members for 2022

IAAPA has elected five new board members for 2022. The board formalised the appointments during its meeting in Barcelona, Spain, on September 25.

Among the newly elected members of the board is Wuthichai Luangamornlert, ICAE, who has been elected as second vice chair. He is managing director of Siam Park Bangkok Co. Ltd., operator of the largest water and amusement park in Bangkok. Luangamornlert will lead IAAPA as chair of the board in 2024, serving first as vice-chair of the association in 2023.

Greg Hale, chairman of the IAAPA Governance Committee and vice-president and chief safety officer for Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, commented on the appointment, saying:

"Wuthichai brings tremendous experience, expertise and a unique perspective to this leadership role at IAAPA and I know he will ensure the association provides the events, products and services needed to help our industry fully recover from the global pandemic and thrive."

Also elected to the board of directors in 2022 is Corrine Brindley, corporate vice-president, state affairs, SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment, US; Bonnie Weber, senior vice-president of park operations, Six Flags Entertainment Corporation, US; Har Kupers, Vekoma Rides Manufacturing, the Netherlands; and John McReynolds, senior vice-president, external affairs, Universal Parks and Resorts, US.

## Legoland Florida celebrates its 10th. birthday



LEGOLAND Florida celebrated its tenth birthday in October with a host of celebrations, including the Legoland Story, special birthday treats and the debut of the new Miniland shade structures.

Legoland Story immerses Lego fans into the fascinating story of the much-loved bricks. Visitors learn about how Legoland theme parks were built and have evolved over the years. This new attraction features photo displays, an interactive minifigure trading wall, floor-to-ceiling colourful graphics that illustrate the different chapters of Lego's history and much more. Guests also have the chance to build their own Lego masterpieces in the Master Builders' Workshop, featuring hands-on brick experiences.

Additionally, birthday bash pop-ups invite guests to dance along with their favourite Lego characters. These pop-up entertainment hubs also feature the biggest Lego birthday cake to celebrate the park's tenth birthday.

On October 15 Legoland's iconic Miniland area reopened having undergone a transformation throughout the year which included the installation of new shade structures. The tenth anniversary also features a new 4D movie, *Lego Mythica – Journey to Mythica*, new Lego models, new Lego build activities, Planet Legoland and the Lego Dots Build Your Art Gallery.

## Volta EV charging stations come to Six Flags parks



SIX Flags has partnered with Volta Inc., a firm that develops commerce-centric electric vehicle (EV) charging networks. The partnership will see Volta EV charging stations installed at Six Flags parks across the United States.

The implementation of the EV charging stations is part of Six Flags' vision and commitment to modernising its parks and enhancing the guest experience through technology. The first of the charging stations will be installed at Six Flags America, located outside Washington D.C., and others at more Six Flags parks will follow.

Stephanie Borges, vice-president of strategic marketing and partnerships at Six Flags, commented: "Six Flags is committed to incorporating technology that elevates our guests' experiences through innovation. The partnership with Volta will enable us to provide a unique offering for our guests, while also supporting our sustainability initiatives."

## MediaMation's former CEO resumes the role

MEDIAMATION Inc. (MMI), providers of innovative technological solutions to the themed entertainment and amusement market, has announced Daniel Jamele, the company's co-founder, is to revive his role as CEO.

Daniel and Alison Jamele founded the company in 1991. Over the years, MMI has been involved in many high-profile, award-winning projects, including collaborating with some of the biggest theme park brands in the world, such as Disney, Universal, Six Flags and more. Dan Jamele was CEO for 25 years, until taking a three-year hiatus. Now MMI has announced its co-founder is stepping into the shoes of CEO once more.

Jamele plans to drive MMI forward following the disruption of the last two years caused by the pandemic and to showcase new projects and products. Also on the agenda is a move of company headquarters. The movie programming team will soon be relocating to a new state-of-the-art programming/demo studio, which was formerly owned by recording artist and jazz composer and pianist, David Benoit.

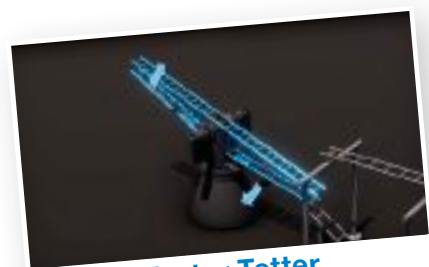
Commenting on resuming his position, Daniel Jamele said: "I look forward to the reopening of both the cinema and theme park industries and MediaMation's sustained growth in both markets. We are so grateful to our clients, employees and friends who helped us to weather that storm and come out with more opportunities."



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## Walt Disney World gives \$3m in grants to six non-profit organisations



TO mark its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Walt Disney World is giving six non-profit organisations in Central Florida \$3m in grants.

The organisations include Give Kids the World Village, which is dedicated to helping children build physical and emotional strength to fight critical illness. Funding will also go to Boys and Girls Clubs in Central Florida, which empowers children with the confidence they need to stay out of trouble. Walt Disney World will also give granting to Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida, which helps create hope and nourish lives through a powerful hunger relief network.

Another non-profit the theme park will be granting to is Heart of Florida United Way, a long-standing partner to Walt Disney World Resort. The organisation is focused on improving the lives of individuals and families by building strong communities and uniting people. Hope Partnership will also be a recipient of the grant. The organisation is committed to supporting families experiencing homelessness and poverty.

Elevate Orlando, which works to build life-changing relationships with urban youth, will also receive funding.

## Florida's Peppa Pig Theme Park opening date announced

THE world's first standalone Peppa Pig Theme Park is to officially open on February 24, 2022. The all-new park is located just outside Legoland Florida Resort.

The theme park has been designed with pre-schoolers in mind. It will feature six themed playscapes, six rides, a water play area and other unique Peppa Pig experiences.

Among the attractions is a sensory-rich trail, a colourful splash pad with "muddy puddles," tricycles to pedal along an all-terrain course and a number of rides. These include Daddy Pig's roller coaster, Grumpy Rabbit's dinosaur adventure and Grandad Dog's pirate boat ride.

Visitors can test their strength on Mr. Bull's hammer and bell ride and soar above the park on Peppa Pig's balloon ride.



Fun live shows will be a key feature of the theme park and youngsters will have the chance to meet Peppa and her family as they meander round the park.

A limited number of annual passes to the theme park are available, as well as inclusive annual passes which grant admission to the Legoland Theme Park, Legoland Waterpark and other regional Merlin Entertainments attractions.

## New World Rides develops rotational ride experience

IN an effort to foster a more realistic and dynamic rotational ride experience, New World Rides in Florida has developed a "rotational VR ride platform called Roto Loco that provides rotational locomotion, affording 360 degree rotation," states Nick Suttell, the company's CEO.

As he puts it, the system doesn't need to trick riders into thinking they're rotating, as it doesn't use hydraulic activations, and essentially affords nearly any rotation in any direction at any time, allowing for a more comfortable experience.

According to Suttell, "the dual seater system uses stereoscopic 360 degree VR imagery and actually rotates riders upside down. It employs a three-axis gimbal and combines motors and VR."

So far, no riders have become sick from using the system, "because the physical rotations match the virtual rotations, making the ride a much more comfortable experience," he claims, adding that riders also feel more comfortable because of their greater control over the rotation.

Suttell calls attention to the system's use of hand and finger tracking and its high fidelity, affording the highest level of presence. The system allows riders to "interact with digital objects that rotate the ship and to view their partners' avatar."

One of the key advantages of the system is its flexibility and mobility. Suttell stresses that it offers a short duration experience in a relatively small area of 20 x 20sq.ft and accommodates a maximum weight of 325 pounds for each rider. In Suttell's view, this makes the system appealing to small amusement centre operators as well as theme parks. He emphasises the system was built from the ground up for virtual reality.

The first experience developed for the system is a space fantasy experience called Shuttle 39, which challenges two riders to mine asteroids and collect artifacts while escaping dangerous obstacles around the asteroid, Suttell explains. One rider serves as the pilot of a ship and has control over rotating the ship, thus navigating it. The other rider acts as a "collector," shooting at artifacts in order to collect as many as possible.

As Suttell points out, players must communicate closely with each other in order to accomplish the mission. This highlights the social nature of the experience and the Roto Loco system, he says.





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## Ardent Leisure releases annual financial report

THE Ardent Leisure Group, a leading Australian owner and operator of attraction and leisure sites, has released its annual financial report for the year ending June 29, 2021.

According to the group, the significant impacts of COVID-19 on the travel, leisure, tourism and entertainment sectors have continued to affect the business. The theme parks business, consisting of Dreamworld, WhiteWater World and SkyPoint, reported trading revenue of \$36m (US\$26.7m) for the year, down 33.9 per cent on the prior year, mainly due to the pandemic.

Following the easing of government restrictions, SkyPoint and Dreamworld reopened in July and September 2020 respectively. In August of the same year, the group secured funding for the Australian operations from the Queensland government.

The \$69.9m (US\$49.6m) financial assistance package acquired from Queensland Treasury Corporation in August provided sufficient liquidity for the business to fund working capital and capital projects. These projects included the new Steel Taipan roller coaster, which is due to open towards the end of 2021.

In a statement, Ardent Leisure Group's chairman, Dr. Gary Weiss, said: "Our priority continues to be on ensuring the health and safety of our guests and team members, with robust safety protocols and Covid Safe plans in place. While we expect uncertainty from the pandemic and associated governmental restrictions to continue for the remainder of this calendar year, we are confident that Ardent is well positioned for future growth once market conditions begin to improve."

## Ocean Park to add glamping and zipline

OCEAN Park in Hong Kong is to be developed into a holiday resort with the addition of glamping and zipline facilities.

The park's executive director, Timothy Ng Sau-kin, said the destination needed to reposition itself, stating: "We are no longer just an amusement park. We will be a holiday resort."

Reports suggest that Ocean Park will begin to phase out attractions, such as the Mine Train and the Ferris Wheel, in order to reduce costs. It is expected to continue to operate around seven or eight rides that have been launched in the past 10 years.

The site is due to begin recruiting operators for a number of new zones, including a retail, dining and entertainment zone, an adventure zone and a wellness zone. The three zones will cover 376,000sq.m.

Plans are also in motion for Ocean Park to recruit a company to construct and operate zipline facilities located near the Raging River and Mine Train rides.

Lau Ming-wai, chairman of Ocean Park Corporation, said: "We can only achieve the park's new vision with the right line-up of partners who share the long-term goal not only for the park, but also Hong Kong in general."



## Universal Studios to bring Pokémon to Japan

UNIVERSAL Studios in Japan is to bring a new Pokémon attraction to the theme park.

The park, located in Osaka, is teaming up with The Pokémon Company, entering a "long-term partnership" designed to immerse visitors at theme parks into the world of Pokémon. New Pokémon attractions will combine real and virtual experiences. The partnership between the two companies will begin in 2022.

J.L. Bonnier, president and CEO of Universal Studios Japan, commented on the collaboration, saying: "Pokémon is beloved by fans around the world. We are honoured to have a long-term partnership with The Pokémon Company while developing ground-breaking Pokémon entertainment at Universal Studios Japan for both Pokémon fans and our guests."

In March 2021, Universal Studios Japan opened Super Nintendo World. The new world offers a variety of Nintendo-themed attractions, including Mario Kart and Yoshi's Adventure ride. Plans are also in motion to extend Nintendo World, with the addition of a Donkey Kong area in 2024.



## Disney villains return to Hong Kong Disneyland for Halloween



DISNEY Halloween Time returned to Hong Kong Disneyland once more this year, with some of Disney's most iconic villains ascending on the theme park to take part in the Halloween extravaganza.

Disney villains took over Adventureland, turning it into a new Wicked Fun Party Zone. As well as mingling with some of Disney's best-loved baddies, visitors were invited to join in the spooky fun by dressing up in their own Halloween costumes or as well-known Disney characters. Selfies with Mickey and Friends, Vampirina, Winnie the Pooh and Friends and Duffy and Friends were also added to the Halloween excitement.

New to this year's event was Vampirina and Princess Sofia, who joined the procession for Mickey's Halloween Time Street Party, while trick or treating has been up for grabs in the Halloween Time Festival Gardens in Fantasyland, where little ones can create their own trick or treat bags.

The Halloween fun ran at Hong Kong Disneyland until October 31.



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## Halloween Horror Nights exhibition comes to Resorts World Sentosa

THE first ever Universal Studios Singapore Halloween Horror Nights Exhibition was held at Resorts World Sentosa this Halloween.

Resorts World Sentosa is located on Singapore's resort island of Sentosa. Spanning 49 hectares and home to world-class attractions, the venue is described as Asia's premium destination resort. The exhibition invited guests to revisit some of the most iconic scare zones, haunted houses and shows that have provided scary entertainment during nine years of south east Asia's Halloween Horror Nights.

Halloween fans came face-to-face with horrifying props, displays and facts about what is involved in creating the Halloween event. Throughout the exhibition, visitors were transported into a terrifying world as they encountered a series of ghosts, ghouls, monsters and other nightmarish creatures within the exhibition.

## White Christmas to return to Warner Bros. Movie World, Australia

THE White Christmas event will be returning to Warner Bros. Movie World theme park on the Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia, this December.

The festive event will include similar activities to previous White Christmas events, including a White Christmas Parade, a meet the Santa experience, Santa's Village and a fun-filled entertainment schedule. A Christmas feast will be prepared by Mrs. Claus and her Elves at Santa's Chalet and guests will be able to enjoy visits throughout the dinner by some of Santa's special friends.

Visitors who purchase Rudolph's Candy Quest will be able to explore magical precincts and collect Christmas candy treats at every stop. These self-guided candy trails pass through Christmas Corner and Santa's Village. Guests can also visit the Fairy Tree House and Fun Zone. Christmas decorating, whereby visitors are invited to decorate their own baubles, mugs and gingerbread, will add to the fun, enabling visitors of all ages to create their own handmade Christmas keepsake.

At the time of writing, official dates for the White Christmas festivities at Warner Bros. Movie World had yet to be released.



## Donkey Kong expansion revealed for Super Nintendo World

FOLLOWING months of speculation, Super Nintendo World has officially announced it is adding a Donkey Kong expansion.

Nintendo have said that the new space will expand Universal Studios Japan's Super Nintendo World by 70 per cent. The world will feature its own themed roller coaster and interactive experiences, as well as food and merchandise. The space will be designed to resemble a lush jungle with Donkey Kong and the clan regularly appearing.

Shigeru Miyamoto, game director at Nintendo, shared his enthusiasm about the announcement, commenting: "I am very happy to be able to make the world of Donkey Kong a reality following the world of Mario. I am looking forward to creating a thrilling Donkey Kong experience with the amazing team at Universal. It will take some time until it is completed, but it will be a unique area for not only people who are familiar with Donkey Kong games, but for all guests."



## ITEC appoints David Roadcup creative director of south east Asia

ITEC Entertainment, creator of entertainment solutions around the world, has announced David Roadcup is to be the company's creative director for south east Asia.

Roadcup has worked in the theme park and attractions sector for 36 years. The industry veteran has been with ITEC for more than 25 years, in a number of creative design positions. Roadcup has also been employed as director of design and creative director for Novaland in Vietnam and as art director for Walt Disney World.

Additionally he has held several creative roles in production design, show design, as art director and in senior level design leadership, working on theme park, waterpark and entertainment projects in the US, China, Vietnam and the Asia-Pacific. As creative director, Roadcup will be responsible for developing ITEC's client base in south east Asia.

Bill Coan, president and CEO of ITEC Entertainment, commented: "David has strong global experience creating diverse theme parks and attractions and we are delighted to have him return to ITEC to support our growth in the region. "We are seeing great interest and activity in this part of the world and David has the ideal skill set and connections to local developers which will help us capitalise on the momentum."





## Universal Beijing Resort officially opens

FOLLOWING 20 years of planning and construction, Universal Beijing Resort (UBR) has officially opened its doors to the public.

Marking the occasion was an opening ceremony, which was attended by Tom Williams, the CEO and chairman of Universal Parks and Resorts, Tom Mehrmann, president and general manager of Universal Beijing, and Song Yu, chairman of Beijing Tourism Group.

The grand opening was attended by tens of thousands of guests, who experienced the resort's rides, attractions, immersive experience, entertainment, retail and F&B for the first time.

Commenting on the long-awaited opening of the venue, Tom Williams said: "Universal Beijing Resort has been 20 years in the making and marks an important milestone for Universal Parks and Resorts, our partners and everyone associated with this project. We are grateful for the guidance and commitment this project has received from all levels of government."

Universal Beijing features seven themed lands, fusing Chinese culture with popular Universal experiences. The lands include the world's largest Minion Land, Universal's first Kung Fu Panda land, its first WaterWorld land and the world's first Transformer themed lands. There are also lands inspired by Harry Potter, Jurassic World and Hollywood.

## Jinma Rides to open regional headquarters in Wuhan

IN a bid to expand production capacity, Jinma Rides is planning to build regional headquarters in Wuhan, China.

Earlier this year, the company signed an investment framework agreement with both the Wuhan district government and a construction firm. A District Entry Agreement was also signed a month later. Under the agreement, hundreds of millions of Chinese yuan are due to be spent on the construction of the new production base.

The new facility is expected to house an R&D centre, entertainment production workshops, a VR smart manufacturing area, an R&D test base and other facilities for advanced production. The site is expected to cover around 13 hectares.

The company's domestic production bases and subsidiaries are currently all located in the southern region of China. Opening headquarters in the commercial city of Wuhan is seen as a strategy by Jinma Rides to further infiltrate markets and enhance its presence across all regions in China.



## Triotech announces 4D theatre installation at Happy Valley Tianjun

TRIOTECH, creators of immersive and interactive attractions for the entertainment industry, has announced the installation of a 60-seat XD Theatre at Happy Valley Tianjun in China.

The immersive theatre features motion technology that combines 3D stereoscopic movies with special effects. More than 40 movies are available in the ride's catalogue of films, meaning operators can regularly change the content to entice visitors back.

The family appeal and high THRC provided by the 60-seat XD theatre are principal reasons the Overseas Chinese Town Group (OCT), of which Happy Valley theme parks are a part, opted for the attraction.

The XD Theatre is located in the Viking Harbor land of the 200,000sq.m park, which is home to more than 30 attractions. The attraction opened in July this year and is the ninth attraction by Triotech to be installed in Happy Valley theme parks in China.

Han Jie, Triotech's sales general manager for China, commented: "The OCT group and Happy Valley are key clients of Triotech and over the years we have built trust by constantly deploying amazing attractions that deliver a fun guest experience and a solid return on investment for the park."



## Huge Ferris Wheel to be built in Dalian

EARLIER this year, Jinma Cultural Tourism Development Co. Ltd. signed an agreement with a number of organisations to supply and operate a giant Ferris Wheel.

The wheel is being built at Xinghai Plaza in the city of Dalian. Boasting an attractive coastline and a warm climate, Dalian is a popular destination for both domestic and international visitors.

The Ferris Wheel is known as the Dalian Eye and stands 128m high. 28 sleek and state-of-the-art capsules rotate on the structure, providing a 720 degree panoramic view of the coastline below. The attraction is equipped with a cantilever spar cable-stayed support system to keep the wheel firmly secured over the water. It is expected that the Dalian Eye will provide the city with an additional tourism boost.

Jinma Cultural Tourism Development Co. Ltd. is a subsidiary of Jinma Rides. It was founded in 2019 and is focused on investing and developing cultural tourism projects in China.



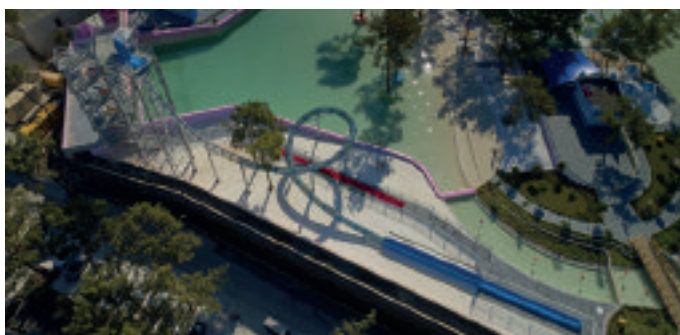
# WATERPARKS

## Polin introduces world-first transparent Looping Rocket

POLIN Waterparks has announced the world's first fully composite looping rocket waterslide.

The first installation of the Glossy Looping Rocket took place in July 2020 at Candyland Waterpark in Bodrum, Turkey and the attraction has been greatly received among guests. The high adrenaline ride boasts an incredibly high drop and the fully transparent slide can be enjoyed by visitors in the day and after dark, thanks to its phosphorescent glow. Enhancements can also be added to the slide for park operators wanting to boost the guest experience further.

With new additions such as the Glossy Looping Rocket, Polin continues to provide innovation to the water attraction market using the latest in composite-manufacturing technologies. Since converting 100 per cent of its fibreglass production to light resin transfer moulding (LRTM) in 2006, Polin has regularly introduced innovative components to its rides, including patterned and transparent composites, special lighting effects, wooden and metallic finishes, sound-integrated components, unique slide designs, three-dimensional waterslides and other innovative touches.



## Wavegarden announces ambitious plans for Japanese expansion

WAVEGARDEN, the Spain-based company dedicated to the development of innovative man-made wave technology, has announced ambitious plans to expand in Japan.

Wavegarden says it is working in partnership with promoter JPF to develop up to seven projects in different regions of Japan over the next seven years. The JPF Group is experienced in developing projects in the sports sector, including the development and management of six velodromes.

Wavegarden is no stranger to the Asian market. In 2020 the company inaugurated Wave Park near Seoul, dubbed the largest surf park in the world. For the Wave Park project, Wavegarden worked in alliance with the Daewon Plus Construction Group, one of South Korea's leading theme park and property developers.

The company's expansion into the Japanese market follows another alliance the company made in July 2021 in Latin America. For the next 10 years, Wavegarden will also be working with Brazilian developer KSM Realty on various projects.



## AWM announces new line-up of waves for surf facility in Japan

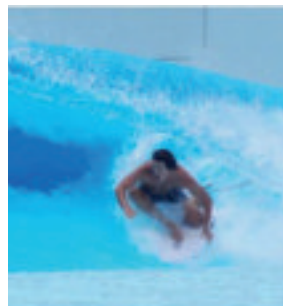
AMERICAN Wave Machines (AWM), creator of surf park, wavepool and wave technology, has introduced a new line-up of waves for PerfectSwell Shizunami, the surf facility in Makinohara, Japan.

The site recently played host to training sessions for the Japanese and USA Olympic surf teams. One of the new waves is known as The Drainer, which comprises two, three-second barrel rides on the same wave. Another new wave created by AWM is the WedgePop, hailed as boasting the biggest air section to date.

According to professional surfer Evan Geiselman, who visited PerfectSwell Shizunami to try the waves for himself, the WedgePop only takes up one third of the pool. "The best way to sum it up is as a game-changing air section. It's a one pump, throw yourself, body and board as high as you can and try to do the biggest air of your life," said Geiselman.

The third new wave is known as the Highball and is described as a "professional surfer's dream canvas providing opportunities for a variety of manoeuvres and a massive finishing move."

Speaking of the Highball, Evan Geiselman said: "In my mind, the Highball is the best wave ever made in a pool."



## Two new waterparks coming to the UK in 2023



TWO new waterparks are to open in the UK in 2023. Plans for the parks have been approved and both will be located in Manchester.

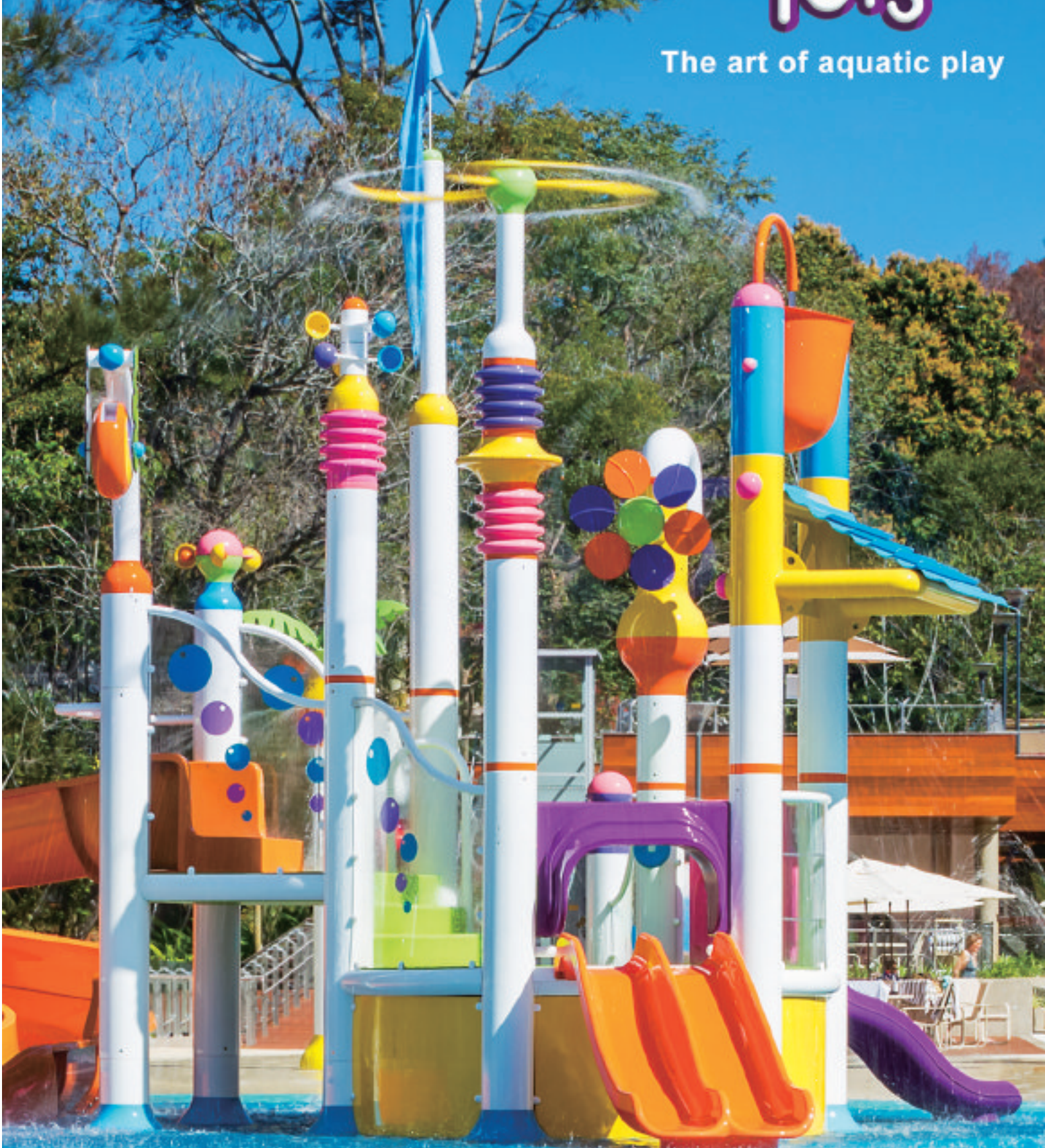
One of the sites will be operated by Therme Group, developers of wellbeing resorts in Europe. The park will feature 35 slides, 25 pools and 30 steam rooms and saunas. Plans for the venue include a large botanical garden on the site, including roof-top beehives and weekly exercise classes. The site will surpass the current largest waterpark in the UK which is located in Blackpool and features 18 slides.

Richard Land, chief development officer of Therme Group UK, commented on the new site. "Therme Group is based on a belief that wellbeing should be accessible for all. Therme Manchester will redefine city wellbeing, enhancing mental and physical health through an experience based in water and nature. It will offer a unique holiday at home that acts as a catalyst for healthy lifestyles."

The other venue due to be developed is known as the Modern Surf, which will include a surfing lagoon. Both waterparks will be located next to the Trafford Centre, which is just outside Manchester city centre.



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# WATERPARKS



## SeaWorld's Sesame Place set to open in March 2022

SESAME Place San Diego is to replace SeaWorld San Diego's Aquatica, the 17-acre waterpark in

South Bay, which was recently closed.

The Sesame Street focused attraction venue will follow the success of Sesame Street at SeaWorld Orlando and the original Sesame Place theme park located just outside Philadelphia. The new site will feature popular attractions, including the family coaster that invites riders to choose their favourite box car, the Super Grover's Box Car Derby.

The destination will also play host to the iconic Sesame Street Party Parade, featuring the show's much-loved characters, including Murray, Elmo, Cookie Monster, Big Bird, Rosita and Count von Count.

The new park will retain many attractions that were popular at the old site, including 11 water rides. These will be updated so they boast a Sesame Place theme. Remaining at the new site will be the 500,000-gallon wavepool, which is one of the largest wavepools in Southern California. New to the waterpark will be seven Sesame Street themed dry rides and an interactive musical play area.

Seasonal events will be a leading feature of Sesame Place, as will the storytelling event, Nest Storytime, which will be a regular fixture.

## Students complete waterpark internship at Yas Waterworld

A GROUP of young people who are enthusiastic about waterparks recently completed an internship at Yas Waterworld, the Emirati-themed waterpark located on Yas Island in Abu Dhabi.

A total of six interns learned about different aspects related to the operations of a waterpark, including rescue techniques, first aid and hospitality. The two-month internship at the Abu Dhabi waterpark provided the youngsters with essential lifesaving skills while the participants were also shown behind-the-scenes operations at the park. The project comprised more than 2,300 hours of work in a multi-cultural, hands-on environment.

20-year-old Mohammad Al Abdullah, who wants to embark on a career in aviation, commented: "I have learnt discipline, dedication, patience and respect in a real-life working environment, understanding first-hand how a waterpark operates."

Student Dewnaya Mudalige, 16, from Sri Lanka, said the experience contributed to her personal enrichment. "The work environment came a very close second, as it was so wholly and utterly positive and completely surpassed initial expectations," said Mudalige.



## Duelling water slide to debut at Aquatica Texas

RIPTIDE Race is to debut at the Aquatica waterpark in Texas in 2022. The new attraction will be the park's first ever duelling pipeline waterslide.

The two-person raft ride starts at the top of a 51ft tower. Riders then race down duelling side-by-side flumes, challenging each other while navigating tight turns, loops, drops and accelerations. Riders race across indoor and outdoor sections to reach what is described as the ultimate splash at the finish line. The high-speed family water ride features almost 565ft of slides and is the first water ride of its kind in San Antonio.

Byron Surrett, park president of SeaWorld and Aquatica, commented on the arrival of the ride, saying: "The addition of Riptide Race will give thrill seeking guests another exciting reason to visit Aquatica. We're committed to providing our guests with new experiences at our parks. Riptide race is the third new high-speed water ride in as many years and it gives guests one more heart-pounding ride to experience again and again."



## WhiteWater announces new appointments

WHITEWATER has recently announced two new key additions to its team.

Frank Good is to lead business development at Vantage, the technology unit at WhiteWater that is focused on accelerating the digital transformation of the leisure industry through an advanced software platform. Industry veteran Domingo Vergoossen has been appointed vice-president of global business development at the company's water rides division.

Good has devoted 10 years of his career to helping clients succeed through technology. He has worked with many leading brands in the amusement and cultural sectors.

Vergoossen's experience in water ride design and projects spans over 15 years. He started his career as a designer at Vekoma Amusement Rides and was subsequently tasked with establishing Vekoma's first China manufacturing facility in the Guangdong province in 2004.



Domingo Vergoossen



Frank Good



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# Unique tourism and leisure development planned for Old Sydney Town, Australia



DEVELOPER WCTV has unveiled plans to create one of Australia's most unique tourism destinations, consisting of various sub-projects and offering diversity in experience, which would look to ensure repeat visitation and continued relevance.

Located on the Central Coast in NSW, Australia, Old Sydney Town was previously an open-air museum and theme park which was a living tribute to the early years of Sydney's colonial settlement in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Closed in 2003, WCTV is now hoping to bring the land back to life by combining a wide range of tourism uses and experiences, from theme parks to shopping outlets and botanical gardens, themed hotels and more. The redevelopment of the Old Sydney Town precinct will create Australia's first and largest comprehensive multi-cultural tourism destination.

The developers are now hoping to attract investors and operators of entertainment, cultural and creative attractions, as the project serves to leverage the established location and visitor base, while creating a new outlet for revenue, employment and tourism growth.

Located just off the Pacific Highway, the area boasts easy access to the Sydney Central Business District and covers 120 hectares of land. It is anticipated by WCTV that the development of the tourism

destination will be an integral part of the Central Coast Regional Plan 2036, bringing with it an abundance of people to the area both domestically and internationally.

Already home to Sydney's famous Australian Reptile Park, which will continue to operate thanks to its 30,000 plus visitors each year, the proposal of 14 tourist sites forecasts visitation soaring in excess of 1.5m people per year. Further to this, the scale of the development will demand a strong workforce and provide significant employment opportunities and economic benefits to the region. The full list of planned tourism elements includes theme parks, community outdoor spaces, destination shopping outlets, themed hotels and function centres, a cultural industry quarter and museums, eco adventure zones, botanical gardens cages, a global immersive short stay district, water shows and recreation area, wave park, an eco leisure tourism area, eco conservation area and the potential for a residential development.

Moving forward, the goal now is to get the detailed planning for stage one of the project off the ground by the early part of next year. It is hoped that construction will begin towards the end of 2022. Full construction of all stages is anticipated to take around five years to complete.



# Legacy Entertainment and Lotte World celebrate 10 year milestone



**The Jumping Fish attraction is one of many on offer at Lotte World**

OCTOBER 2021 marked the 10 year anniversary milestone of the first collaboration between California, US, based Legacy Entertainment and Lotte World in Seoul, South Korea's leading theme park.

During the course of the past decade, Legacy and Lotte World have completed eight projects together at the park, driving park attendance from 5.8 million visitors in 2011 to a high of 7.6 million as of early 2020/pre-COVID.

Executives of both companies say that their unique creative partnership will be taken to the next level later this year upon the opening of Lotte World Adventure Busan – an all-new, 25 acre outdoor theme park located in the country's second most populous city.

Yaeli Chung, Legacy Entertainment's managing director of South Korea, reflected on the relationship between the two organisations, saying: "Now in its 32nd year of operation, Lotte World is an icon of

Korea. We are deeply honoured and humbled to have had the opportunity to work closely with the Lotte World team to create attractions and experiences which have positively impacted the lives of millions of people every year."

Lotte World is a world-class theme park located in the heart of Seoul. Since its opening in 1989, the park has frequently ranked among the world's top-performing theme parks, consistently drawing between five and seven million visitors annually. Located in Seoul's Jamsil district, the park is divided into two main themed areas – Lotte World Adventure (indoor theme park) and Magic Island (outdoor attraction area). The park features a number of heavily themed attractions, including The Adventures of Sinbad, Pharaoh's Fury and Atlantis Adventure, in addition to a number of classic family rides, shows and attractions.

The portfolio of completed Legacy/Lotte World projects, which ranges from immersive themed lands to a ground-breaking night time spectacular, have helped to modernise the park. Originally sporting an “international theme” popular of the era, with zones themed to England, France and Spain, among others, Legacy, in its design, specifically aimed to create themed districts and experiences that are timeless, not relating to any specific timeframe or period.

The first such attraction, named Jumping Fish, debuted in 2012. Utilising Zamperla’s popular Flying Tigers ride system, Legacy helped elevate the experience by setting the attraction in a richly detailed sea cave environment, complete with original characters and lighting effects. Following a successful launch, a new interactive media theatre dubbed Do You Speak Beluga? was quickly added adjacent to Jumping Fish, rounding out this new aquatic themed zone.

Nearby, the Legacy team transformed two S&S Frog Hoppers into an all-new experience themed to the popular Korean fairy tale of Brother Moon and Sister Sun. This immersive children’s attraction, named Tall Tales, was the first such attraction in the country based on traditional folklore.

Legacy and Lotte then set their sights on Lotte World’s basement level, aiming to expand the park’s capacity in the wake of growing attendance. Here, they first re-imagined the park’s ticketing zone into the Lotte World Welcome Centre – an upscale arrival lobby more akin to a luxury hotel than a theme park. Inspired by the Korean folk tale of the Ogre’s Magic Club, the new Underland themed district premiered in 2013, widely expanding the park’s food and beverage offerings while also serving as home to a Triotech XD Theatre. Further expansions on this level included



**The Legacy team transformed two S&S Frog Hoppers into a new experience themed to the popular Korean fairy tale of Brother Moon and Sister Sun. The immersive children’s attraction is called Tall Tales**



**Guests enjoy the Let’s Dream! night time show**

the Fairy Trails land, which is anchored by an elaborately themed ABC Rides Mini Flume, and the Wild Tours immersive district, home to Sega’s popular Wild Series simulators.

The largest and most ambitious project to date at the flagship Seoul park was the 2014 debut of the Let’s Dream! night time spectacular. Combining a light parade with a multi-media production, the nightly event featured many ground-breaking elements, including the largest fleet of drones ever utilised in a theme park, as well as the first use of hologram effects in a parade. Upon its debut, the production was hailed by theme park fan sites as the greatest light parade ever created and directly led to a 2.8 per cent boost in park attendance and a 35 per cent increase in visitor length of stay.

The enduring partnership between Legacy and Lotte World will soon enter a new phase as the pinnacle of this collaboration, a full new Lotte World theme park in the southern city of Busan, is in the final stages of construction. Centred around the theme of a magic forest, the outdoor park will feature five themed zones filled with elaborately themed architecture, expansive garden displays and anchored by world-class rides from Mack Rides, Zamperla, ABC Rides and others.

“The collaborative achievements of the last decade at Lotte World have exceeded anything we could have possibly imagined back in 2011,” adds Ms. Chung. “I for one cannot wait to see what the next decade holds.”

**All images courtesy Legacy Entertainment**

# Jinma Rides provides multi-ride package for Sega's Guangzhou Joypolis



AFTER much anticipation, the Guangzhou Joypolis indoor amusement park is now in the final stages of preparing to open to the public. The third location for the indoor amusement park brand, operated by amusement giant Sega, the Guangzhou venue joins parks in Shanghai and Qingdao, China.

Having been heavily involved in the Shanghai and Qingdao parks, manufacturer Jinma has now supplied and installed 13 carefully engineered and elaborately themed rides at this latest park in Guangzhou.

Having overseen the execution of the project, Jinma's International Division vice-president, Leo Jwei Lee, told InterPark: "We have already completed the installation and commissioning for 12 amusement rides. Now we are at the last stage of commissioning for the roller coaster."

Named Shockwave Riders, the coaster aims to deliver an abundance of thrills to park visitors. At 482m long and 14m tall, it is a spinning coaster featuring spirals, banked turns and a half-U run that penetrates the 10m high upper floor. To pack more elements within a limited space, Jinma has used a Linear Synchronous Motor (LSM) launch system for the coaster in place of the conventional chain-lift or friction wheel launch.

"We communicated with the Sega design team and proposed the LSM solution because we all knew that the indoor facility puts a strain on

spatial availability," said Jwei Lee. "You don't want a lift-hill that takes up a large amount of space. As well as this, Sega wanted the coaster train to be shot through the upper floor and roll back, so we needed to work out a launch mechanism that was able to provide that momentum."

According to Jwei Lee, a friction wheel launch was voted out because the wheel replacement would be regular and launch speed would vary as the wheels wore. "Simply, it would not be up to the penetration run task," he said.

The coaster has two LSM launch zones, each tasked with launching the train at a specific speed. "Using the LSM launch, we are more confident that we are able to shoot off the train at the designed speeds," continued Jwei Lee.

Explaining further, Jwei Lee said the physics behind LSM sees sets of permanent pairs of magnets fixed underneath the ride train. When powered up, the runner plates, lined up along the centre line of the track within the launch zone, produce a controlled magnetic field which interacts with the magnets on the train, creating a strong push force in the direction of travel; this horizontal force propels the train forward.

"The benefits of using LSM on a roller coaster are obvious," added Jwei Lee. "The system is virtually maintenance free as there is no wear and



tear on the launch system as opposed to a friction wheel launch or chain-lift in which significant abrasions occur to running mechanical parts; so minimum repair and maintenance is required."

Block systems are adopted for the coaster, which enables two trains to run on the track separated by blocks. These monitor and control the train's position and speed within each block, thus ensuring that train collisions don't happen. "Using block systems, we are able to use the track efficiently and consequently increase the ride's hourly capacity," notes Jwei Lee.

While commissioning work at Guangzhou Joyopolis is close to completion, Jinma Rides has already started working with Sega Joyopolis for a fourth park, with rumours there will be an indoor LSM roller coaster at this venue too.



# The World's Most Magical Celebration marks Walt Disney World's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary milestone

By Beth Whittaker



WALT Disney World Resort opened to guests 50 years ago on October 1, 1971. The entire world was eager to see how Walt Disney's genius had transformed the trackless flatlands of Central Florida into a Magic Kingdom.

Ten thousand guests, their smiles as wide as the October skies, streamed into Walt's fairy-tale park on that historic day, ready to be transported to a world of fun and fantasy, where tea cups spin, elephants fly and life's cares melt away at the gates.

*"May Walt Disney World bring joy and inspiration and new knowledge to all who come to this happy place . . . a Magic Kingdom where the young at heart of all ages can laugh and play and learn together." — Official Dedication, Oct. 25, 1971*

These words were spoken by Walt's brother, Roy O. Disney, at the official grand opening of Walt Disney World. Mickey Mouse, sporting the world's largest bass drum at the time, led 5,000 marchers in a festive parade through the five lands of the Magic Kingdom park. Guests were also treated to a high-stepping marching band 1,076 performers strong.

Sadly, Walt did not live to see that day, but after years of planning and construction (and Roy postponing retirement to help see it through), his much-anticipated "Florida Project" was open and ready to welcome the world. From one theme park, two resort hotels and two golf courses, Walt's dream today is a world unto itself including four theme parks, two water parks, more than two dozen resort hotels, Disney Vacation Club properties, Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground, 63 holes





of championship golf, ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex, Disney's BoardWalk entertainment enclave and Disney Springs, a waterfront entertainment, dining and shopping district.

And now 50 years and millions of memories later, Walt Disney World Resort is on the brink of an exciting new era of family entertainment as it kicks off the next 50 years. All of it inspired by the ultimate dreamer, Walt Disney.

To celebrate this major milestone, Disney World Resort guests are being treated to The World's Most Magical Celebration, which is set to last 18 months. Featuring new experiences at the resort's four theme parks and beyond, shining at the centre of it all will be Cinderella Castle at the Magic Kingdom park, which will add to its royal makeover from 2020 with new gold bunting, sparkling golden embellishments and other new enhancements, including a 50th anniversary crest warmly welcoming guests to the join the festivities.

In October, a new night-time spectacular, Disney Enchantment, kicked off the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary festivities at Magic Kingdom. Launched to coincide with The World's Most Magical Celebration, the evening extravaganza took guests on a journey filled with adventure, wonder and empowerment. Inspiring everyone to believe in magic, Disney Enchantment featured music, enhanced lighting, stunning fireworks and, for the first time, immersive projection effects that extended from Cinderella Castle down Main Street, U.S.A.





Over at EPCOT, guests have been treated to Harmonious, one of the largest night-time spectacles ever created for a Disney park. This new show brings the globe together at World Showcase Lagoon in a celebration of Disney music that aims to inspire people worldwide. It's a grand, powerful tribute to the unifying power of story and song, embracing new technical magic that incorporates pyrotechnics, fountains, lighting and media in new ways. Harmonious features new interpretations of classic Disney songs, reimagined in more than a dozen languages by a diverse group of 240 artists from around the world.

Also at EPCOT is the new Remy's Ratatouille Adventure, inviting guests into the flavourful world of Disney and Pixar's Academy award-winning Ratatouille. In this family-friendly attraction, guests feel as if they shrink to the size of Chef Remy and scurry through Gusteau's famous restaurant. They will discover Remy's Ratatouille Adventure in a newly expanded area of the park's France pavilion, where the real is made fantastic in a reimagining of Paris inspired by the film.

Also new for this section of the pavilion is a new restaurant, La Crêperie de Paris, offering both table and quick-service options. The menu features sweet crepes, savoury buckwheat galettes and authentic French hard cider. The attraction, restaurant and pavilion expansion are all part of the historic transformation of EPCOT currently underway, bringing a breadth of new experiences to the park as a celebration of curiosity, discovery and the magic of possibility.

Another element of The World's Most Magical Celebration sees icons at each Walt Disney World theme park transform into magnificent Beacons of Magic at night, coming to life with their own EArident glow. Cinderella Castle illuminates Magic Kingdom with a dazzling radiance that sparkles with pixie dust, while at Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park, a warm light emanates from the Tree of Life as magical fireflies gather to usher in the magic of nature.

The Hollywood Tower Hotel at Disney's Hollywood Studios is awash in a brilliance, evoking the golden age of imagination and adventure.



And at EPCOT, new lights shine across the reflective panels of Spaceship Earth, connecting to one another in a symbol of optimism, resembling stars in a night-time sky. The iconic structure's permanent new lighting will continue beyond The World's Most Magical Celebration as a defining feature of the park.

During the daytime, entertainment stirs at Disney's Animal Kingdom, as Disney KiteTails comes alive several times daily inside the Discovery River Amphitheatre. Performers will fly windcatchers and kites of all shapes and sizes, while out on the water elaborate three-dimensional kites – some stretching to 30ft long – will depict Disney animal friends, including Simba, Zazu, Baloo and King Louie. These colourful creations dance through the sky to the beat of favourite Disney songs in an uplifting, vibrant experience for the whole family.

The 50-year anniversary will also see golden sculptures of Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Daisy Duck, Goofy, Pluto and Chip

'n' Dale pop up across the four Walt Disney World theme parks. There will be 50 characters featured overall in the Disney Fab 50 Character Collection. Mickey, Minnie, Donald, Daisy, Goofy, Pluto and Chip 'n' Dale will also be dressed in sparkling new looks, custom-made for this special occasion. Highlights of these celebratory designs include beautifully embroidered impressions of Cinderella Castle backed by fireworks, as well as a brocade in multi-toned, EARidescent fabric – all punctuated with pops of gold.

With Mickey and Minnie the official hosts of The World's Most Magical Celebration, they will be joined by Walt Disney World cast members, wearing new EARidescent nametags designed for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, with the entire cast demonstrating yet again why they are renowned for their commitment to service, consistently exceeding guests' expectations by going above and beyond to make visits to The Most Magical Place on Earth special.



# IAAPA Expo Europe brings the industry back together



**The team from Mack Rides was out in force at the Barcelona show**

THE first IAAPA Expo to take place since 2019 was held in Barcelona, Spain, from September 28 to 30 when the IAAPA Expo Europe took place at the city's Fira Barcelona Gran Via exhibition centre.

"Looking forward with optimism" was the theme of the opening address at the event which carried through the week as the expo brought industry representatives from the region and further afield together again. Preliminary estimates indicate the event attracted 8,500 participants (compared to 15,900 in 2019 when the show was held in Paris), including 5,800 qualified buyers and 439 exhibiting companies (compared to just under 650 in 2019). The buyer participants represented 3,200 companies.

"IAAPA Expo Europe represents a fresh start for our entire industry," said Jakob Wahl, then vice-president and executive director, IAAPA Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA), during the opening session. "This expo is about preparing for the future, inspiring each other and sharing important learnings from the global pandemic."

In addition to the three day exhibition, the expo also hosted a full conference programme which included keynote addresses, industry presentations, panel discussions and workshops covering industry trends, best practices and outlooks for the future. Topics covered included F&B, marketing, human resources, operations, trends and innovation, accommodation and design, among others.

The education conference began at PortAventura World. The theme park hosted the IAAPA Safety Institute and a behind-the-scenes tour of the park as well as IAAPA EMEA's first-ever Sustainability Day. The full-day sustainability event featured industry professionals from the EMEA region sharing their parks' strategies for becoming carbon neutral, incorporating sustainability practices throughout their facilities and providing guidelines to create a sustainability plan that supports business goals. Participants also took an exclusive tour of PortAventura Dreams, the park's onsite resort which annually provides complimentary visits to 200 children with critical illnesses and their families.

And to recognise PortAventura's commitment to sustainability and pioneering efforts across all lines of business, as well as its openness in

sharing best practices with the industry, IAAPA presented the first-ever IAAPA EMEA Award for Extraordinary Efforts on Sustainability to the park during the expo.

On Tuesday, September 28, the first day of the show, internationally known travel writer Doug Lansky presented the opening keynote presentation about using challenge and crisis as inspiration for positive change. His engaging speech was then followed by the official opening of the trade show floor. On the same day, the annual Leadership Breakfast took place, this being opened by a presentation from Fernando Aldecoa, CEO of PortAventura World, who outlined the venue's sustainability efforts.

A number of special events and dedicated "days" also featured at this year's expo, with events being hosted by Water World and Aquadiver and Tibidabo, as well as PortAventura World. They included professional development programmes, behind-the-scenes facility tours, keynotes, workshops and more. An Opening Reception at Tibidabo Amusement Park overlooking the city of Barcelona was another highlight of the event for attendees following the first day of the expo.

"The attractions industry truly is like a family," noted Hal McEvoy, president and CEO of IAAPA. "To finally come back together, in person, means a great deal. We understand our members and the industry are still working through the ongoing impact of COVID-19, but we are confident the industry will emerge from these challenges stronger than ever. Our role is to help members and the global attractions industry push through and IAAPA Expo Europe was an important step toward full recovery."

"This week's show demonstrates the strength of the attractions industry throughout the EMEA region and the rest of the world," McEvoy continued. "Exhibitors represented more than 43 countries around the world. International attendees came to meet with them and make serious buying decisions for their upcoming season and beyond."

IAAPA Expo Europe 2022 will take place at the Excel exhibition centre in London, UK, from September 13 to 15. At the time of writing, more than 325 exhibitors had already reserved 11,745sq.m of booth space for next year's show.



**On the Zieler booth were Jeroen Nijpels, Marina Ernst-Weiderer, Michael Hahn and Martin Weichselgartner**



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# IAAPA Expo Europe news

## Zamperla

Following its attendance at the Saudi Entertainment and Amusement Expo in early September, Zamperla once again highlighted its updated coaster portfolio at the IAAPA Expo Europe, showcasing its newest designs as well as its innovation in coaster engineering, in addition to promoting its extensive range of other rides and attractions.

Zamperla released specifics about the Double Heart and the Family Coaster Lift/Launch earlier this year but in Barcelona the company revealed three additional concepts to the market.

"We have spent the past five years investing in both talent and technology," said Alberto Ferri, Roller Coaster Division director. "Our capabilities continue to improve and we have demonstrated our ability to engineer and fabricate products that are some of the best in the industry. Ensuring that our engineering to fabrication pipeline works seamlessly has been at the heart of our improvements."

The company's coaster division has projects of a complexity that were not historically associated with Zamperla. Installations such as a Junior Coaster at Ferrari World (UAE), the Factory Coaster at Wuxi Sunac Land (China) and the Thunderbolt at Mundo Petapa (Guatemala) demonstrate a levelling-up of the company's coaster quality. In addition, Canal Peak at

Yangzhou OCT Fancy City (China) will open soon and promises to be one of the smoothest thrill coasters the company has produced.

Other coasters that have made their debut this year include Dragon's Apprentice at Legoland New York, a family coaster; Storm, Magic Kass (Israel), a powered coaster; Taxi #1 at Bollywood Parks Dubai, a family coaster; and Tidal Twister at Columbus Zoo (US), a Twister coaster.



From left to right are Zamperla's Andrea Cielo, Antonio Zamperla, Jnr., Alberto Zamperla, Adam Sandy and Marco Mazzucchi

## Intamin

Intamin has continued to complete a range of projects this year despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

In July the company's newest Multi Dimension Launch Coaster, named Namazu by the park, opened to the public at Vulcania, France, while a month earlier the Movie Park Studio Tour, also a multi dimension launch coaster, opened at Movie Park Germany. Two other coasters to debut earlier in the year were the mega coaster Kondaa at Walibi Belgium and the Legendary Twin Dragon at Sunac Land Chongqing in China, a double twisted Impulse coaster.

Other openings due to take place this year include two LSM launch coasters in China and the Hot Race Big Dipper at Luna Park Sydney in Australia. One of the company's key projects for 2022 will be the opening of Pantheon at Busch Gardens Williamsburg in the US, the world's fastest multi-launch roller coaster with four launches.

Commenting on the Barcelona trade show, Intamin's Sascha Czibulka said: "What a positive surprise; the IAAPA Expo in Barcelona was a really good exhibition for us. It was once again very well organised and it was great to see and experience the good vibes on the show floor. We were positively

surprised about the good attendance, especially of the quality, and highly enjoyed being back in the real world. Meeting with our colleagues and friends from the industry face to face, who we haven't seen for a way too long time, cannot be replaced. The numerous discussions we had with our clients during the three days in Barcelona made us more than confident and optimistic about the short and the long term future of our industry. And we very much look forward to a similar experience in Orlando this November."



On the Intamin booth (from left to right) are Sascha Czibulka, Lukas Spieldiener, Gerard Slenders and Daniel Schoppen

## Simworx

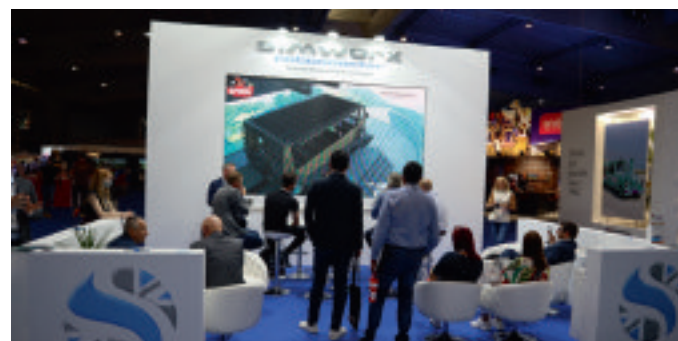
Media based attractions specialist Simworx showcased the latest additions to its product portfolio at the Barcelona trade show, in addition to sharing details of recent projects.

Branching out further into the FEC market, the company's new Alpine Racer VR attraction was a highlight of the event. This delivers a dynamic but compact and affordable solution for smaller vendors that immerses guests and offers a taste of sledging at high speed down alpine slopes. Its competitive gameplay allows riders to play against friends in pursuit of the highest score which can be tracked on the game app's worldwide scoreboard.

Extending the company's Flying Theatre selection is the addition of Simworx's Fly Motion Attraction. A hybrid of the Immersive Tunnel and Cobra Dark Ride Theatres, the Fly Motion offers a more accessible Flying Theatre experience designed for venues with low ceiling heights. It provides a 30 seat capacity and an optional track system that allows guests to board in a separate loading area before moving through for a grand reveal of the show room.

Simworx also recently delivered the Reodor Felgen's Hyperakselator ride to Hunderfossen Eventyrpark in Norway. The attraction features

characters from the famous Norwegian author and illustrator Kjell Aukrust's Flåklypa Universe. Consisting of four, eight seater Stargazer units with 6DOF motion, the ride vehicles are themed to represent the Hyperakselator from the story, complete with on-board special effects, including water spray, wind and leg ticklers, and an "interactive" Hyper boost button for guests to press at the appropriate time to enhance the story's realism.



Simworx revealed a number of new products at the Barcelona show

## Vekoma

Despite the difficulties posed by the pandemic for all those in the industry, Vekoma Rides Manufacturing is one company that has continued to work on a range of projects around the world during these difficult times, with a number of new coaster openings being completed during 2021.

Among these have been the openings of a custom designed Family Boomerang Spirit and Super Shockwave double launch coaster at Energylandia in Poland, an indoor family coaster at Doha Quest in Qatar and a custom suspended family coaster, Phoenix, at Deno's Wonder Wheel Amusement Park in the US. In China, Fantawild has seen the opening in 2021 of a Top Gun launch coaster at two different parks, while other projects at Fantawild parks this year have included three family Boomerang Rebound coasters and a Hyper Space Warp looping coaster.

More projects are due for completion in 2022 with one of the highlights of the year being the highest and fastest coaster in Denmark, which is due to debut at Fårup Sommerland. This Wild Cat looping coaster will be 40m high, will reach speeds of up to 95kph, will feature the world's first "stall loop" element and will have more airtime than any other amusement park ride in Scandinavia.

Also due to open next year are a Mine Train at Energylandia in Poland, a Kalypso family coaster at Tayto Park in Ireland and two Top Gun launch coasters and a Renegade looping coaster at Fantawild parks in China.



The Vekoma team enjoyed a successful return to the IAAPA Expo Europe

## Huss

Huss Park Attractions used the IAAPA Expo Europe to announce the launch of the Break Dance 5, a brand new, highly innovative, landmark attraction which follows in the footsteps of the original and very successful Break Dance ride.

The design of the Break Dance 5 is based on the "secret Break Dance formula" that was developed for the original ride, which has become the most successful attraction ever created by Huss.

Incorporating the innovative Huss Operator Centre Stage, multi-media and special effects, the Break Dance 5 is aimed at both families and thrill seekers alike. These unique new elements within the attraction are the main visible differences between the original ride and the new model.

The Operator Centre Stage is a brand new location for the operator who becomes part of the ride and the "show." Taking charge of the entire ride experience, he is equipped with full show control to allow him to interact with the guests and the ride – all literally from a position in the very centre of the attraction.

The Break Dance 5 offers two rides in one attraction, with operators able to run two different sets of show ride cycles, six in total, to provide an all-inclusive family experience or a white knuckle thrill ride.

In total there are 20 gondolas on the Break Dance 5 providing a maximum rider capacity of 40. A range of additional options is also available, including customised theming and lighting, customised show ride cycle programmed to the client's choice of soundtrack, a multi-media package, special effects and an innovative loading platform with brand-new features.



On the Huss booth were Mirko Schulze, André Warnecke and Lars Hartmann

## Severn Lamb

UK-based transportation specialist Severn Lamb reports that it is currently busy with a variety of projects for clients both at home and overseas.

Earlier this year the company delivered two battery electric road trains featuring modern styling to Kew Gardens in London, while Nottingham Castle has also taken delivery of the first fully electric road going Severn Lamb train in the UK.

On the south coast of England, Southend-on-Sea pier will soon begin operating two battery electric trains which will replace its original trains manufactured by Severn Lamb in 1986, the new models running the length of what is the UK's longest pier.

Future projects for the company include two themed, battery electric trains for the Aquatar theme park on Qetaifan Island North in Qatar, which is due to open in 2022, and a period style, battery electric train based on an old Cincinnati train from the 1850s for the Dayton History Museum in Ohio.

On the show itself, Severn Lamb's Patrick Lamb said: "It was great to be back in a face to face environment and a pleasure to meet back up with industry friends, colleagues and clients within the region. Generally, given the current Covid climate, the attendance at the show was excellent. This was reflected in the volume and quality of our leads generated on the show

floor. We hold out hope for the future and are looking forward to doing it all over again in Orlando."



Severn Lamb's Patrick Lamb

# IAAPA Expo Europe news

## Interlink

Water ride specialist Interlink reported a successful IAAPA Expo Europe and provided an update on various projects the company is currently involved in.

These include a SuperFlume ride for the new waterpark being built on Qetaifan Island North in Qatar, which will incorporate a number of unique and exciting new features. Several other projects are underway in Vietnam, China and northern Europe, while a SuperFlume and Water Battle ride are also in the pipeline for a new park in the US, these being due to open at the end of 2021/early 2022.

Providing his thoughts on the expo, Interlink's John Davies said: "It was a very good show for us with lots of new sales leads and a very good attendance. It was also great to see so many friendly faces from the industry after such a long time. The show was extremely well organised and clearly a great deal of attention had been paid to safety. We are now looking forward to the next event in Orlando in a few weeks."



Interlink's John Hudd (left) and John Davies

## Gosetto

"The IAAPA show in Barcelona was good. It was nice to meet clients after such a long time. We had the chance to sit down and have a chat again," said Andrea Casagrande from the Italian company Gosetto.

The event saw the company debut its new family ride, MarcoPolo, which features ride gondolas that move around, jump up and down and swing all at the same time. "Innovation to entertain the whole family with minimal maintenance required" as the company describes the new attraction.

Gosetto was also promoting its new Compact Fun House, an attraction that is very easy to install and transport around the fairs and which fits easily into smaller spaces. "With the most popular features like toboggan, rotating barrel, rotating carpet and pull-out with two floors, it ensures an exciting experience for patrons who certainly won't stop at just one ride," Casagrande explained.

He added the company currently has two four level, trailer mounted Fun Houses in production along with a number of kiddie rides for the Arabian market.



Gosetto's Andrea Casagrande

## MK Themed Attractions

"Due to COVID-19 we have had to change our focus a bit and are therefore focusing a lot on helping our clients attract guests during the seasonal events of the year through our various themed concepts that are ready to install."

So said Belinda Sørensen at MK Themed Attractions which displayed just a small sample of the themed possibilities the company is able to create on its stand at IAAPA Expo Europe.

"We had a really good show and got to talk with a lot of trusting and new clients," Sørensen continued. "Based on the conversations and meetings we had, we are beginning to see an increased interest in the Easter season of the year. Our client Liseberg, for example, already uses this season to brand their grand opening of the year and has turned the season into a yearly tradition for their guests with family friendly Easter egg hunts using our large fibreglass Easter eggs and other products. Due to this we have extended our Easter product portfolio and will be showing off the new Easter products at IAAPA Expo in Orlando. If the year's existing seasons can help our clients extend their opening months, why not grab the chance?"

And she continued: "The most remarkable project we have finished this year is Paultons Park's Tornado Springs (in the UK), where we produced all the themed elements including different gates and rooftop decorations such as a stool, a pig, a sheep and all the cute groundhogs for the tractor ride, just to name a few.

"Regarding future projects we are unfortunately not able to talk about them yet. But we have expanded our production facility this year and will

expand it even further next year to accommodate the large-scale demand we are experiencing."



Thomas Hede Larsen (left) and Ole Jacob Nielsen of MK Themed Attractions

## ETF

The Dutch company ETF Ride Systems announced the launch of its new water ride vehicle, the Aqua Mover, at the Barcelona show in addition to revealing its turnkey attraction concept, the Tiki Splash Roulette.

The water ride is designed for all ages and boasts various game features, with the heart of the ride being a challenge for Kanaloa, Tiki god of the sea. He decides, based on the riders' scores, if they stay dry or get wet, so it is a real game and a first for a water ride. The water guns on the vehicles are electrically operated, differing from the manual systems currently on the market.

Ruud Koppens, CEO of ETF Ride Systems, commented on the launch of the water ride concept, saying: "We regularly got the question whether our people movers were also available on water and from now on we can say wholeheartedly 'yes.' Our new ETF Aqua Mover is suitable for indoor water dark rides but is also included in the outdoor Tiki Splash Roulette concept."



Andrea Deckers and Ruud Koppens on the ETF booth

## BoldMove Nation

Together with its various partners, BoldMove Nation demonstrated its design services and product portfolio at the IAAPA Expo Europe. The company's successful debut at the show provided proof of the current demand for fun and immersive but affordable indoor family attractions.

"Our engaged partners Polymorph, AdventureLAB, Chauvet, Triotech, DWL and Mediatoon Licensing contributed actively to the booth and activities during the show. It's been great to shine together, forging alliances and friendships to create happier worlds for our customers," said Anja D'Hondt, managing partner of BoldMove Nation, regarding the company's first major trade show participation with its team of industry experts.

Benoit Cornet, CEO of BoldMove added: "With visitors returning to the parks, happiness and relief was in the air so our Smash & Reload dark ride was warmly welcomed. It fits exactly the current need of regional parks for an affordable and fun indoor family attraction. The interactive Smash & Reload dark ride combines an easy gameplay with hilarious TooMush IP and action-based shooting, all on a compact footprint with high throughput. Park owners can create a unique experience, accessible to all ages and still challenging

with a high-scoring application. This dark ride infrastructure and philosophy brings the dark ride truly back to its essence, without compromising on fun."



This year's IAAPA Expo Europe was BoldMove Nation's debut appearance at the show

## Alterface

The Belgian company Alterface used the IAAPA Expo Europe to provide customers with a preview of its new product Wander.

Wander is a software based solution for designing and activating adventures taking place in themed venues, where thousands of visitors can play at the same time and with multiple days of content dynamically adjusted to their actions.

Once installed in a venue, Wander links multiple physical interactive stations and tracks visitors' actions to provide a personalised, always evolving story. According to the company "Wander will turn visitors into adventurers, crossing the park in search of clues, rewards or surprises, talking with actors, interacting with props ... living a personalised adventure in an immersive themed environment."

Alterface also notes that immersive experiences and activations have been a trend in the industry for the last 10 years and states: "We believe the depth and complexity of immersive experiences will keep evolving, allowing guests to change the whole environment, return and continue their adventures and interact with the attractions as well as with live actors, props and every other element a themed venue can provide for a full immersion."

Wander is also the technology behind the new theme park experience based on Ubisoft franchises and designed by Storyland Studios, more details of which will be revealed at the forthcoming IAAPA Expo in Orlando.



Alterface CEO Stephane Battaille

# IAAPA Expo Europe News



Darpan Shah, Hardik Shah and Siddharth Jain of Arihant Waterpark Equipment



Oliver and Paul Wiegand from Entertainment Resource



Dan and Graham Liddle of Formula K International



Isaac Martin Viana, Alexandro Zecca, Mr. Vito, Daniele Baschiroto, Augusto De Santi and Christoph Wunderlich on the SBF Visa Group booth



Bertazzon's Angelo Signorotto and Michele Bertazzon



Luciano Balzano, Giulia Negri and Edward Cromheeke on the booth of Fabbri Group



Jan Bijl and Nel Anna Krzeblowska on the Image+ Digital booth

# IAAPA Expo Europe News



Innovative Leisure's Keith Finnegan, Phil Pickersgill and Emma Booth



Lars Lenders and Josh Hays of S&S Worldwide



The ProSlide team included Aaron Wilson, Anna Gavrylova, Nicolas Creis, Inaki Laucirika, Rick Hunter, Silvia Perez and Jeffrey Janovich



JRA's Keith James, Chloe Hausfeld and Dan Schultz



On the KMG booth were Albert Kroon, Amy Kroon and Peter Theunisz



David Cappelletti on the Murphys Waves booth



James Brocklehurst and Pauline Quayle of The Juice Films



# Blackpool Pleasure Beach marks 125 years of ‘serious’ fun – a tribute to an amusement park jewel

By David Whitworth

ONE of the world's most beloved and popular amusement parks this year celebrates the very special anniversary of 125 years in existence. Created in 1896 in the seaside resort of Blackpool, England, by Alderman William George Bean, the Pleasure Beach haven of roller coaster attractions and shows has lived through many majestic memories.

Run by the renowned Thompson family, the park is home to a mammoth 125 rides and attractions in total – a ride for each of its memorable years, including 10 roller coasters and five water themed rides.

In 1994, Blackpool was put firmly on the map as one of the principal roller coaster capitals of the world with the opening of the Big One, from Arrow Dynamics, which at the time was the tallest, steepest (65 degree incline) and fastest coaster (74mph) on the planet. Standing a giant 213ft (65m), the current tallest coaster in the UK gives a wonderful thrill from its first lift hill of 205ft (62m) and subsequent descent, seemingly into the sea, to winding through various other rollers coasters. The Pleasure Beach spent £12m to construct a ride at the cutting edge of technology and raised the bar on what was possible for a world class coaster.

Another high point for the Pleasure Beach was the inception of the attraction originally codenamed Project 2000, which came to be the Viking experience that is Valhalla. It cost £16m to build at the turn of the millennium and is one of the largest and most expensive indoor dark rides in the world. Its amazing features were a world first and it proved an instant hit for the park, attracting international acclaim. In 2018, the park won an award for the best water ride at The Golden Ticket Awards in the USA and has won subsequent editions of the prize. The attraction is currently going through a cosmetic restoration ready to reopen for the 2022 season with a refit utilising modern day technology.

Infusion is another thrilling attraction as riders fly over the park's lake at breakneck speed. Formerly the Traumatizer at Southport Pleasureland, the suspended coaster cost £8m when it was relocated to the Pleasure Beach for the 2007 season. The ride is very popular at the resort and it is the only coaster of its kind to be built entirely over water, giving riders a huge aquatic immersion.

Blackpool Pleasure Beach's latest thrill ride is the Japanese themed launch coaster ICON, supplied by Mack Rides. Built in 2018 at a record

cost for the park of £16.25m, the attraction has two feature launches which shoot riders to speeds of up to 85mph. Yet ICON is a smooth ride and manages to weave through the park's other coasters, creating many exciting near miss elements.

The park is known for being a hit with "woody" enthusiasts worldwide with a record four wooden roller coasters making their home at the Pleasure Beach. They include the Blue Flyer and Nickelodeon Streak while the Pleasure Beach is also home to the famous dueling roller coaster the Grand National, which was created in 1935 based on the theme of the famous horse race of the same name. The attraction is the only racing coaster ride of its kind in the UK and one of only two in operation in the world, along with Racer at Kennywood. The ride offers plenty of fun air time moments and its rickety and authentic experience is a tremendous rush.

Another firm favourite is the timeless classic the Big Dipper, which has been in operation since 1923. It was further made famous in August 1998, when American ride enthusiast Richard Rodriguez successfully entered the Guinness Book of Records by riding the attraction for a hair





raising 1,000 hours from June 18 right throughout the summer. He also rode into the record books by riding the Big One and Big Dipper for 112 consecutive days – an impressive 405 hours and 40 minutes from July 27 to August 13, 2007.

Along with the coasters, the Pleasure Beach is known for its rich heritage and golden oldie rides. There is the wondrous River Caves, one of the original flagship rides of Sir Hiram Maxim's Flying Machines, Europe's first 360 degree looping coaster, the Revolution, and the high octane Steeplechase. The Pleasure Beach thrives on their uniqueness. The park is also home to the Derby Racers, a carousel of 56 horses and one of only three similar rides in operation.

The Alice in Wonderland ride was permitted by Walt Disney himself, who paid a visit to the park after hearing glowing reviews of the

attraction. Indeed, on viewing the park, one can see the influence of Disneyland from the raft of fantastic attractions that the Pleasure Beach offers its guests. It has also had some iconic rides over the years, such as one of its original roller coasters, The Velvet Coaster, which opened in 1909. This gave joy to passengers until 1932 but the name still lives on as in 2015, a local pub named their new establishment The Velvet Coaster in honour of the wooden coaster.

Guests used to be able to ride a monorail throughout the park through an aerial travel service. It had two carriages, one open air and one enclosed for when the great British summer was .... typically British. In turn, this journey offered great views of all of the Pleasure Beach, including passing through its much revered paradise for children, the five-storey Fun House, which was previously situated where Valhalla now lies. The monorail also travelled through the park's roller coasters and was one of the only modes of transport of its kind when it was constructed in 1966, operating until 2012.

Another mode of transport was the Cableway, which existed from 1960 through to 2000. The two-seater gondolas took guests from one side of the park to the other. Over 300 passengers an hour could sample the sea and park views from the attraction. Another long-term servant was the Tom Sawyer Raft Ride, a tow boat ride around the lake which Infusion now glides over. It was in operation from 1974 to 1993.

Noah's Ark was a walk-through ride which operated from 1922 to 2008, while the Gold Mine was a fast runaway train ride through a maze of underground tunnels and past animated miners at work – a definite family favourite. It was functional for 40 years, from 1971 to 2011, when it was transformed into another modern family favourite, The Wallace and Gromit Thrill-O-Matic attraction.

But despite continuing to operate many older rides the park very much lives in the modern day and maintains creativity and innovation. An example of this is the new experience of Walk the Woodie, which is a guided walk of the track and lift hill of one of the Pleasure Beach's iconic wooden roller coasters. It is a breathtaking opportunity to see the ride from a unique perspective and is a hit with all adrenaline junkies.



The Pleasure Beach is living history and continues to be popular with a wide catchment area of visitors. The facility is a leading UK amusement park, attracting many millions of guests each year. It also attracts many guests to its two seafront hotels, the Big Blue Hotel, which offers 157 rooms, and the more recently opened Boulevard Hotel, which debuted in 2019 and provides 120 rooms. Visitors can stay on the grounds of the park and be “at the heart of excitement,” with each hotel offering themed roller coaster rooms, a blend of coastal and park facing rooms as well as world class facilities for conference events.

The park has done fantastically well to remain operational during its 125th anniversary season in light of the ongoing pandemic. Following the announcement of the governments easing of restrictions from July 19, Blackpool Pleasure Beach maintains a number of measures to ensure the safety of its guests and staff. The park, like all across the world, has had to adjust to the new regulations in these ever-changing times but the Pleasure Beach is fully open and has been providing its guests with a season to remember as it marks its milestone anniversary. The park’s slogan is “Serious about your fun” and it continues to bring fun in abundance and will continue to do so for generations to come. The Pleasure Beach is the glorious past, the beautiful present and the bright future. It is a pleasure to be savoured.



**To add further to our article on BPB’s 125th anniversary year, InterPark spoke to Blackpool Pleasure Beach’s managing director Amanda Thompson, who has held the position since 2004. She is also the president of Stageworks Worldwide Productions, which produces the park’s award-winning Hot Ice Show and also produced the much-heralded Eclipse shows in the past. Thompson has also held the role of chairman of IAAPA for the past two years.**

**InterPark:** What one word comes to mind when you think of Blackpool Pleasure Beach?

**Amanda Thompson:** Adrenaline

**IP:** What are some of your favourite memories of the park throughout the years?

**AT:** One of my first memories is when I was seven-years-old I was desperately in love with the thought of owning a pony, so I was put to work on our pony ride here at Blackpool Pleasure Beach, so I could learn to look after a pony!

Other things that stand out are the first show I ever staged on the park, then Eclipse, Hot Ice and all of my other shows and also bringing the park to life with rides and attractions like Infusion, Nickelodeon Land, Wallace and Gromit’s Thrill-O-Matic, Skyforce and ICON. On a sad note the death of my father at my wedding also stands out.

**IP:** What is your favourite ride at the Pleasure Beach?

**AT:** My favourite ride at the park is Alice in Wonderland.

**IP:** What ingredients does the Pleasure Beach possess to continue being a thriving park?

**AT:** 6oz of passion, a pinch of thrills and a dash of sparkle and glamour.

**IP:** What has been its biggest successes down the years?

**AT:** Our biggest successes in terms of rides would be The Big One, Valhalla and ICON. My most successful shows have been Eclipse, Hot Ice and Mystique.

**IP:** What does the future look like for the park?

**AT:** As I am the current custodian of the park we will aim to continue to inspire the industry. I want to continue the legacy of this amazing attraction by building towards a stronger and better future.

**IP:** Could you share any information regarding the updated Valhalla attraction for 2022?

**AT:** The secret remains in mine and your imagination. When the ride is back operational we all look forward to braving the adventure of a reimagined Valhalla.

# The Ride to Happiness - Plopsaland de Panne, Belgium

By David Whitworth

RIDERS of Plopsaland de Panne's latest attraction will be head over heels with happiness – literally – as they will be sent into a spin like never before with the creation of The Ride to Happiness.

The Ride to Happiness by Tomorrowland was opened on July 21 to coincide with Belgium's national day. It also coincided with the dates pre-pandemic of the world's greatest electronic dance festival of Tomorrowland, who collaborate with the ride. Their branding is featured not just on the ride, but as part of Plopsaland's new themed area of

Tomorrowland, which heralds from the village of Boom in Belgium. The four elements of water, earth, wind and fire are all present to evoke the festival vibe, which Tomorrowland successfully creates. Added to this is a themed food and beverage section along with merchandise stands which the festival is known for. Through this, Plopsaland brings a flavour of Tomorrowland and forges together two big Belgium brands.

The park describes the emotive experience further, noting: "The magical decorations, uplifting beats, distinctive food stalls and so much more will make you feel like you're on the meadow in Boom. And rest assured, a ride on the Ride to Happiness will be at least as amazing and memorable as the acts on the Main Stage."

The ride cost €17.5m (\$20.3m) to construct and took 18 months to build from start to finish. The attraction is the first steel Xtreme Spinning Coaster in Europe. The ride gives you a real twist for your senses and travels up to 55.9 mph (90km/h). Its height reaches 108.3ft (33m) and its track length spans 3,005.2ft (916m). Mack Rides returned to the park to manufacture the ride after creating the venue's wooden roller coaster Heidi The Ride in 2017. The ride holds the world record for the most inversions on a spinning coaster – twisting a mind bending five times throughout its journey.



The coaster utilises two trains of four vehicles per train. Passengers sit in two rows of two for a ride total of 16 passengers per train. 570 people per hour can ride onboard, which is increased to 720 riders an hour with two trains in operation. The Ride to Happiness has two LSM launches of a maximum of 0.7G to propel passengers to paradise. During the ride, the coaster effortlessly glides over water and its aquatic feature gives riders a rickety ride for the senses.

The Ride to Happiness has beautifully crafted carriages with the signature Tomorrowland logo of a butterfly and an eye. Its track is coloured brown as is the décor of the Tomorrowland festival. And as passengers await the ride and travel on board the ride, an exclusive Tomorrowland soundtrack plays out, which has been created especially for the attraction through legendary producer Hans Zimmer – roller coaster dancing to a new melodic beat.

The spinning coaster commences with a sedate barrel roll to which riders are, after a small pause, launched up rapidly to its maximum height of 103.8ft (31.6m). A steep drop towards the park's pond is followed by a section of various inversions of banana rolls and vertical loops. The ride certainly packs a punch, pulling up to 4.0G at its maximum vertical acceleration. The journey continues with the trains passing two banked turns before riders are propelled once again by the next launch system. The second part of the ride consists of several airtime hills and a dramatic double-inverted dive loop, while it makes its way to the finish with a 180 degree swift turn. One of the hallmarks of the ride is the cars' ability to spin freely throughout the experience – providing patrons with an unpredictability every time.

Maximillian Roeser, head of marketing at Mack Rides, spoke exclusively to InterPark about Plopsaland's new attraction, firstly outlining some of the challenges the project faced.

"Normally you would guess that a seaside park would have rough winter conditions to set up such a ride. But 2020 was challenging us a lot more; with the beginning of the project we started to head right into the pandemic," Roeser explained. "As everyone else, we didn't know what consequences this would have. Would we have a reduced staff at our company? Would we be allowed to travel to Belgium easily? How about the transport of the ride to the park? All these uncertainties came suddenly into play and we adapted very quickly and very efficiently so that we were able to deliver the ride on time to the park."

Roeser went on to discuss the twisting carriage technology utilised on The Ride to Happiness and the thought process in choosing that type of carriage and its difficulties.

"The Xtreme Spinning Coaster trains are designed to combine powerful launch sections and inversions with the ability to free spin along the track," he revealed. "To dampen the rate of rotation we installed a magnetic break below the passenger compartment. Depending on the settings we can make this ride wilder or softer with only a very gentle rotation. When designing the ride layout we prepared external magnetic elements along launch number one to give the cars an initial rotation





while being launched forward. When riding guests will never know in which direction they are going to spin along the track.”

The ride also features a variety of different elements along the length of the track, such as the banana roll, dive loop and the zero-g roll, and Roeser explained to InterPark why these particular elements were chosen.

“The banana roll in combination with the Xtreme Spinning Coaster is a very disorientating element; you see where the track is going but the inertia will make the car spin the other way around. To have this as a direction changing element at one end of the layout was very important for us. Also it might look old-fashioned from the outside, but the vertical loop is a wonderful example of what the Xtreme Spinning Coaster offers for guests. Riding this element sideways is so unique and you can clearly see the horizon doing a 360 degree roll while going through.

“And right after launch number two we’ve got the double inverting dive loop standing tall over the entrance plaza of the ride. This element is the most dynamic on the track and would already be a great hit with a non-spinning car. With the Xtreme Spinning Coaster gondolas this is an outstanding masterpiece right at the beginning of part two of the track.”

Plopsa is a theme park division within the Studio 100 media group and incorporates seven theme parks in total. They attract three million visitors annually. Plopsaland is situated in the seaside resort of de Panne and is an ideal destination of roller coaster enthusiasts. The park was recently awarded the prize of Europe’s Best New Coaster, bringing The Ride to Happiness further joy.

The slogan for the music festival at Tomorrowland is Live Today, Love Tomorrow and Unite Forever. And The Ride to Happiness gives riders a thrill that they will certainly live and love



Images courtesy  
Plopsaland de Panne/  
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# Hologate X takes location-based VR and hyper-reality in new directions

By Michael Mascioni



The scope of VR attractions in amusement parks, location-based entertainment centers and other leisure facilities continues to dramatically expand

HOLOGATE X, developed by Hologate, now takes VR in new directions with its free-roam HXR (Hologate Xperience Reality) system combining high-end VR with full-body haptic tracking, THX 5.1 surround sound and 4D effects (including wind, olfactory and temperature effects.). "This system will represent a fresh new approach to hyper-reality technology

and the enhanced interactivity will take the social experience to an entirely higher level," states Hologate's CEO and Founder, Leif Petersen. This is part of Hologate's broad mission to expand and upgrade the capabilities of VR attractions to create more realistic and dynamic experiences. Hologate currently has over 400 Hologate VR system installations worldwide, attracting over 10,000,000 players.

Hologate X dispenses with the need for backpacks, "which are heavy and a hassle to carry," says Petersen. Instead, the technology streams cinematic quality virtual reality worlds in high-fidelity directly to the headsets of players, not only offering greater comfort, but also "reducing installation costs while also increasing revenue," he claims. Petersen notes the

technology offers a similar level of graphics quality and immersive experience to what one would have found at a destination like the VOID without the restrictiveness of backpacks. The system is geared to "an upmarket audience that will cater to ages 10 and older," according to Petersen.

The technology was set to be introduced in September at Hologate World in Fürth, Germany. According to Petersen, following the launch of the initial location, Hologate X will be introduced at additional locations worldwide.

The first game for the system is SigVRied: Escape from Valhalla, which is a science fiction adventure based on the Nibelungen Saga, with roots in Norse mythology. The experience "incorporates role-play gaming and an escape room puzzle element. Players are given ultimate power and must work together in the game", explains Petersen. Their mission is to explore the destroyed fortress of the gods, Valhalla, navigate through halls, corridors and chambers and ultimately secure the lost treasures of Nibelungs. In the process, they must complete puzzles, overcome traps, battle monsters and dragons and avoid additional challenges.

Other attractions using HXR are in development, but Petersen isn't at liberty to discuss them presently. According to Gregg Kitano, senior vice-president, US operations: "We are already in talks with theme parks regarding Hologate X, but we cannot disclose any specifics just yet." He also notes that the company has a Hologate ARENA installed at the Rainbow's End theme park in New Zealand.



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## Ken Whiting



### Ken Whiting, Whiting's Foods, US

During the IAAPA Expo in Orlando this November, Ken Whiting, president of Whiting's Foods in the US, takes over the position of IAAPA chairman from out-going chair Amanda Thompson, the appointment having been delayed by a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In an interview with InterPark editor Andrew Mellor, Whiting discusses his time in the industry, his company's activities, his involvement with IAAPA, the association's role within the industry and more

**Andrew Mellor:** When did you first start working in the parks and attractions industry and in what capacity?

**Ken Whiting:** I was about 10-years-old and "hired" by my family business to peel bananas for the chocolate dipped bananas we sold. There was no turning back after that.

**AM:** Can you provide a brief outline of Whiting's Foods and the company's activities?

**KW:** For nearly 70 years, we have been a food and beverage provider at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk in California. Additionally, we operate in a sports arena, as well as at fairs, festivals and special events.

**AM:** When did you first become involved in IAAPA and how?

**KW:** In 1979 I attended my first IAAPA Expo and I was hooked. After attending for a few years, I walked into the education office and asked how I could volunteer.

I was connected to the chair of the Food and Beverage (F&B) Committee who allowed me to participate in an educational session and then asked me to join the committee. Since then, for nearly 40 years, I have continued to volunteer, wherever and whenever needed, in a variety of roles.

**AM:** What aspects of the chairman's role are you looking forward to most during your year in office?

**KW:** I want to be an encouraging advocate for our industry as we re-emerge in new ways from the global Covid pandemic. Additionally, understanding and learning how I can be of service to each of our global regions is a priority.

**AM:** What will be your personal goals and aims during the year?

**KW:** My first objective is to stay true to the IAAPA Strategic Plan and stay focused on successfully completing the established goals. Given my background, I want IAAPA to be more top of mind for food and beverage professionals in our industry. F&B has risen to be a growing and increasingly impactful portion of every facility's business – both top and bottom line. I believe there is more that IAAPA can do to support that side of our industry. I'd also like to raise awareness of the impact we have as employers, particularly on young, first-job employees that we all hire. We need to find ways to encourage young people to think of and choose the attractions industry as they make career decisions and plan for their future. I like to say we have jobs that inspire from a year to a career.

**AM:** What do you consider to be the most important benefits IAAPA can offer its members, both operators and suppliers?

**KW:** IAAPA offers many benefits and services to its members and is always adding to that value proposition. When I think of the most important, advocacy; hosting and supporting the global marketplace, both through expos and events; industry education and certification; relevant, daily news updates; volunteer opportunities; and supporting connections that lead to the ability to make lifelong friends.

**AM:** What do you think are IAAPA's key strengths as an organisation?

**KW:** IAAPA has a clear mission with a global perspective, strong leadership, a committed and capable staff and willing industry volunteers around the world who freely share their experience and expertise.

**AM:** The past 18 months or so have been unprecedented for us all and the attractions industry is one sector that has been hit particularly hard by the pandemic. How has this impacted on your own business and the clients you work with?

**KW:** 2020 was a hard year. Every venue we operate in was closed for over a year. The financial and human impacts were significant and the unknowns took an emotional toll.

2021 offered a different kind of crazy. Guests returned in large numbers, anxious to create the fun experiences they remembered at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. Throughout this period, we stayed focused on how we could improve our business for the long term.

Whiting  
pictured at  
the IAAPA FEC  
Summit in 2020





In discussion with attendees at the 2018 IAAPA Leadership Conference in Japan

**AM:** How has IAAPA been assisting members during the COVID-19 pandemic?

**KW:** IAAPA never “closed” and instead member services increased. There were countless connections made, communities formed, questions answered and lessons learned that were shared with all. The association successfully made the necessary pivot to enhance its digital delivery for events, including virtual trade show and conference experiences, hosting additional IAAPA webinars, adding workplace

community groups and creating a new Facebook Live programme. These all ensured that IAAPA members were informed, connected and engaged.

**AM:** What do you feel will be some of the long term effects of the pandemic on the global attractions industry? Will it change things in any way on a permanent basis?

**KW:** There will be many long-term impacts and new ways of doing business, many of which we have yet to discover and react to. Consumer expectations and perspectives have changed and we all need to adjust how we operate and respond. Among many new initiatives, safety guidelines and standards will remain, attendance levels will be modified and new technology solutions will be implemented.

**AM:** In addition to those relating to COVID-19, what do you feel are some of the other main challenges facing IAAPA members globally today?

**KW:** Safety is our industry’s number-one priority. Adopting global ride and operating safety standards is an important necessity. It benefits our entire industry, our employees and our guests.

Learning to operate more sustainably will challenge members in small and large ways. It will continue to impact operating decisions, manufacturer, supplier and vendor selections, staff training, workplace culture and more. In addition, we must understand different regions and even constituencies are at varying places in how they employ sustainable standards. The IAAPA Global Sustainability Committee is helping us to better understand our members’ needs and how to move forward.

Staffing is one area that has risen as a top priority. Attracting younger employees, retaining employees long term, encouraging them to remain in our industry for their career and communicating the many professional disciplines and opportunities that exist within our facilities and manufacturer and supplier members is an important opportunity not just for IAAPA, but for all of us.

**AM:** How do you see IAAPA as an association developing in the future?

**KW:** As times and member needs change, IAAPA will remain brave, connected and nimble, positioned to excel in member support and services.

## Personally speaking

Not a lot of people know this but I am very good at ... taking out the trash!

The most interesting place I’ve ever been to is ... Guatemala

Family aside, the prized possession I value above all others is ... my Ironman Triathlon finisher’s medal

My favourite film is ... *Rocky* – all of them

When I’m not working I like to ... enjoy a good meal with friends and family

The person who has influenced me most is ... my mother

My favourite musician/band is ... Garth Brooks

If I could invite a celebrity to dinner it would be ... Walt Disney

My unfulfilled ambition is ... to be lead singer in a country band

I really dislike ... negativity. And kale!

# Yas Waterworld, Abu Dhabi

PAR KLIFE



YAS Waterworld is one of the world's leading waterparks and a one-of-a-kind location that offers a fusion of elegant Emirati heritage with cutting-edge ride technology.

By combining local personality with fun aquatic adventures, the park aims to provide a captivating world where its guests can escape for the day and enjoy a unique experience unlike anything else. Yas Waterworld is home to 45 rides, slides and attractions – six of which can't be found anywhere else in the world – along with a diversity of seasonal events and shows.

Yas Waterworld is managed and operated by Farah Experiences, which also operates Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi and CLYMB Abu Dhabi. Farah Experiences' management consists of several departments including shared services – made up of sales, marketing, IT, finance, HR and so on – in addition to the on-ground teams

in each theme park and attraction, such as guest experiences, operations, health and safety, ride operators and technicians, F&B, etc.

As one of the world's leading waterparks, it is paramount Yas Waterworld delivers a unique offering that guarantees a one-of-a-kind experience with every visit. The park continuously strives to uplift guest experiences through its variety of offerings, including the 45 rides, slides and attractions in addition to seasonal experiences and its year-round calendar that encompasses celebrating special occasions, allowing it to provide guests with the chance to tap into their innermost adventurer with one-of-a-kind experiences.

Working with leading ride manufacturers, Yas Waterworld aims to stay up to date with new technologies and experiences from around the world that can be implemented at the park. Taking on-board guests' feedback, the team always ensures the introduction of new experiences based on



their insight, in order to keep guests engaged and entertained. The park pairs advanced technology with exceptional planning and engineering to ensure the highest level of safety and quality of experience for its guests.

Some of the manufacturers Yas Waterworld has worked with include: WhiteWater – responsible for the kids’ areas, including Marah Fortress, as well as all the speed slides such as Slithers Slides and the Speed racer Sebag; ProSlide – responsible for Yas Waterworld’s two iconic rides, Dawamma and Falcon’s Falaj; and Vekoma – responsible for the Bandit Bomber roller coaster, a ride that is unique to Yas Waterworld.

All of the venue’s rides, slides and attractions are based on an original story developed exclusively for the waterpark – The legend of The Lost Pearl. The story follows the adventures of Dana, a young Emirati girl in search of a legendary pearl that had once brought prosperity to her village. Whenever a new ride or attraction is developed for the park, the team ensures that it fits into the story and pays tribute to the Emirati culture and heritage of pearl-diving.

At the same time, it is important the park stays in touch with the modern world and infuses the latest technology to deliver a stellar guest experience. Most recently, the park launched the UAE’s first-ever Underwater VR experience. Guests can jump into the fantastical world of virtual reality while submerged in the water for an unprecedented immersive sensory experience.

The park recognises that innovation is no longer a luxury – it is a prerequisite for the future! Leveraging the latest state-of-the-art technology within the entertainment industry plays a big role in allowing it to expand its portfolio of rides and attractions, by innovating new immersive and personalised water experiences that guests have never seen before.

Catering to international guests, especially those from its key target markets such as the UK, KSA, Russia, India and China, as well as local guests, the team at the park does this by ensuring the dining outlets serve a wide range of cuisines that suit all dietary needs, as well as by hosting seasonal celebrations and events that are tailored to different cultures and traditions. The Kabayan Festival, for example, is one of the park’s most well-attended events and has become a staple favourite for its Filipino guests.



# PARK LIFE



access to over 45 world-class attractions in addition to live Filipino music, the karaoke beach club and a spectacular line-up of beach games at the Amwaj Wave Pool.

Furthermore, and created in celebration of the Spring season, Mermaid Adventures at Yas Waterworld is a seasonal event that introduces a number of games, shows and activities to children and families across the UAE, including the biggest egg hunt on Yas Island and the chance to win giveaways and prizes. It features underwater mermaid shows that offer an interactive and engaging experience, as mermaids dance to music and children are invited to a meet and greet with them as they capture special moments on camera.

For the summer season, Yas Waterworld's Neon Nights brings together a mix of music, performances and light shows with neon vibes spreading throughout the park. With glow-in-the-dark slides, a silent disco and hydrojet shows, Yas Waterworld's Neon Nights are known to deliver an electric experience to park-goers.

Since opening in 2013, Yas Waterworld has strived to become an award-winning destination and has garnered more than 40 industry awards and accolades to date, taking home the Best Waterpark award from Global Brand Awards and the Middle East's Leading Waterpark award at the World Travel Awards, as well as receiving the Trip Advisor Traveller's Choice certificate in 2020.

The park also won the World's Leading Waterpark award for the second year running at the prestigious World Travel Awards and was recognised as Best Waterpark in the MENALAC awards 2019. The venue also took home a Guinness World Record for the Most Nationalities in a Swimming Pool in April 2019, among a host of other awards.

Considered the pearl of Yas Island, the UAE's premium leisure and entertainment destination, Yas Waterworld combines fun aquatic adventures with local personality to provide guests with an experience unlike anything else.

The waterpark's dining offering encompasses everything from quick snacks to sit-down meals, as well as refreshing beverages and frozen desserts. Skinny's Frozen treats is the perfect pit-stop opportunity for chilling out in between rides, offering frozen lemonade, juices, ice cream and shaved ice with syrup. For those in the mood for a mouth-watering meal, Chubby's Kitchen serves up everything from fried chicken and pizza to noodles and daal as guests watch the roller coasters whiz by and pearl divers foraging for treasure, while Dana's diner offers a variety of tasty bites including burgers, a BBQ, wings, salads and sandwiches. For snacks, guests can head down to Salma's Snack Shack, where they can choose from salads, sandwiches and fresh-cut fruit, or the Amwaj Beach Bar where they can enjoy a wide selection of mouth-watering snacks and refreshments including milkshakes, ice cream, shaved ice and popcorn. Lastly, guests can head down to Gahwet Nasser and take home some tasty souvenirs – choosing from Arabic coffees, camel-milk chocolates, fresh dates and heritage gift boxes.

Committed to creating out-of-the-box experiences that cater to its wide array of guest segments, as a proud Emirati establishment, the Yas Waterworld team are cognizant of catering to audiences who value their privacy and launched the Yas Waterworld's Ladies Season, which has quickly grown to be a staple part of the park's calendar. Taking place yearly, female guests can enjoy a fun-filled evening complete with aquatic activities, music, Zumba classes and more. Guest privacy and comfort is guaranteed thanks to the all-female staff and a strict ban on photography.

Another guest favourite is Cinema Under the Stars. This signature event gathers families and friends of all ages to kick back and relax on a poolside or float in the water as they watch their favourite blockbuster films under the starry night sky.

Yas Waterworld also hosts the Kabayan Beach Fiesta. This offers guests the chance to experience the park with five hours of after-dark

## At a glance

Opened 2013

Over 40 industry accolades and awards

45 rides, slides and attractions

Main international target markets include UK, KSA, Russia, India, China

UAE's first-ever Underwater VR experience

Key manufacturer partners include WhiteWater, ProSlide, Vekoma

[www.yaswaterworld.com](http://www.yaswaterworld.com)

# Growing the ‘timber’ for our industry – do it now!



By Dennis Spiegel

Image courtesy  
Delaware Business Times

Continuing his series of articles on the attractions industry, International Theme Park Services (ITPS) founder and CEO Dennis Spiegel discusses the current labour shortage at parks and other venues and the importance of attracting young people to work in the industry

IT'S amazing how fast the past 50 years have flown by. My career started in 1959 as a junior high school student taking tickets at the front gate of Coney Island in Cincinnati, Ohio.

For the next 10 years until I graduated from college, I worked at the Coney front gate. I literally grew up there learning as much as I could about the amusement park business. During my four years in college, I would come

back to the park during the winter breaks to help in any way I could. During these four years, I would recruit young high school and college students throughout Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. It was an incredible experience to interact with so many young potential workers during the late 60s.

Unlike today, the youth employment workforce was enthusiastically and genuinely excited to work at one of America's finest amusement parks, as Coney was known. In fact, at that point in time, we would interview 10 candidates for every job position. What I remember the most was the exuberance and excitement these young students had when I was conducting hundreds of these interviews at high schools and colleges.

I remember thinking, what a wonderful business this was back then, bringing fun and joy to so many families. I also remember thinking a thought that has crossed my mind once again during these last two crazy years we have undergone. The thought was ... this is a young person's business. It's a young person's business due to the creativity, enthusiasm, energy, excitement and spirit the young workforce exudes every day when they walk onto their job in a park. The young people are the timber on which our business is built. You can take all of the bricks, mortar, rides and attractions, but the young and enthusiastic workforce brings the park to life.

The employment problem we are experiencing here in the US is not a short-term problem. There are quite a few indicators that point to the employment drought carrying forward for the next two years. It has affected restaurants, retail, law enforcement, hospitals, airlines, banking

Image courtesy  
Seabreeze  
Amusement Park





Image courtesy Six Flags

and just about every employer. No-one has been spared. Adding to the problem, a lot of unions have piled on the unemployment issue, driving up wages.

It is well-known that amusement parks and attractions had to raise their wages to never-before-seen levels of hourly pay. Will operators be able to continue paying increased wages in 2022? Will they be able to bring wages down to 2019 levels? The big question is, will parks and attractions be able to hire the numbers of employees required to adequately staff up for the entire season? We as an industry have to go back to the way it was several decades ago. We have to start cultivating our young workforce, not just the season before we need them, but five or six years before they are recruited and signed to work.

Some suggestions. Begin working with existing returning employees to assist in recruiting. Develop relationships with high schools and colleges in the surrounding market areas, setting up programmes that help educate and inform young people about what a great first job a leisure attraction can be to their formative years.

I recently found it surprising that the retiring chairman of Proctor & Gamble, one of the world's largest companies, said in a speech that his first job working at Carowinds Theme Park in Charlotte, North Carolina, gave him a wonderful working foundation, which helped him form a strong work ethic that led to a dynamic work path.

Covid has had a horrible impact on the world and our industry. Labour shortage is the biggest issue facing the industry in the current and near term. It's a young person's business and they are our timber. Let's start the planting now.



Image courtesy Universal Orlando

*Dennis Spiegel is founder and CEO of International Theme Park Services (ITPS), based in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA. A past chairman of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA), he has over 50 years' experience in the theme park and leisure industry. Since its inception in 1983 ITPS has worked on over 500 projects in 50 countries and is uniquely qualified to assist in all aspects of entertainment project development.*

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# News round-up ...

**AUSTRALIA** The Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, Bruce Billson, released an interim report in October into the insurance crisis facing Australia's amusement, leisure and recreation sector. The report, *The Show Must Go On*, explores whether a Discretionary Mutual Fund (DMF) can be a durable solution and discusses required legislative reform by states and territories to ensure it is "fit for purpose." It also highlights the need for a DMF to be recognised and accepted as a suitable solution by councils and showground managers. The ASBFEO has been reviewing a proposal by the Australian Amusement, Leisure and Recreation Association (AALRA) to establish a DMF as a solution to the critical and immediate need for insurance in the sector. The interim report found the lack of affordable insurance was not the fault of the amusement industry but due to a "hardening" in the global insurance market. Very few insurers are willing to insure the industry and premiums – when available – had risen by as much as 200 per cent, the report found. "There is a clear and present danger facing the amusement and recreation sector because an inability for these businesses to get insurance cover means that many of the attractions people know and love won't be able to operate," Billson said. "The lack of insurance coverage could lead to the closure of businesses in the amusement and leisure sector, significant job losses (particularly in regional areas), stranded assets and loss of economic activity generated by metro and regional shows and amusement parks."

**US** Legoland Florida Resort celebrated its 10th birthday in October, at the same time celebrating the future with announcements about the fun coming to the resort in 2022, including a new ride and new entertainment enhancements to its calendar of events. In addition, Legoland also debuted an all-new attraction, *The Legoland Story*, to commemorate the 10th anniversary milestone. Next year will see the introduction of the *Pirate River Quest*, a water ride featuring a crew of pirates that will offer a family-friendly treasure hunt. Events during the year will include *PirateFest Weekends*, *Lego Ninjago Days* and the *AWE-Summer* celebration which will introduce some new Lego characters during the summer. A new Halloween show line-up

is also planned, with never-before-seen exclusive Lego characters and an all-new cinematic experience and the year will close with *Holidays at Legoland* and the Kids' New Year's Eve Party in December.

**TURKEY** A new project has officially brought together Polin Group's Futura Form with Merlin Entertainment's Gardaland after executives from the two companies signed an agreement to work together. Representatives of Future Form recently travelled to the Italian park to meet with Aldo Maria Vigevani, CEO of Gardaland SpA, and formalise the contract. Gardaland has been steadily expanding in both size and attendance over the years and now, in its most recent expansion, it will include Futura Form, a composite manufacturing company under the Polin Group that was founded in 2012. The company provides production, design and project-management services in addition to developing and producing a wide range of custom composite products. Recently, Gardaland announced it would open the world's first Jumanji themed ride in partnership with Sony Entertainment. Opening for the 2022 season, the family-friendly dark ride will take guests on a journey through the jungle, encountering a variety of pitfalls, surprises and dangers. Jumanji the movie was originally released in theatres in 1995 and starred Robin Williams, eventually spawning two successful sequels that have proven popular worldwide.

**CANADA** Connect&GO, a global leader in e-commerce, point of sale, ticketing, access control and payment solutions for attractions, has announced the arrival of Tara Morandi as senior vice-president, sales and marketing. With over 15 years' experience in the attractions industry, Morandi will be responsible for driving Connect&GO's market development strategy in North America and Europe. Prior to joining Connect&GO, Morandi was vice-president of marketing at accessio, a leader in the development of technology solutions for the attractions industry, for nine years. Before that she served as director of marketing at ProSlide, a world leader in waterslide and waterpark design. Most recently, she served as vice-president of marketing at Plus Delta Partner, a California-based player that helps non-profit organisations improve their fundraising.

## Advertisers Index

ArtAttack	53
Asia Attractions	25
Bertazzon	9
CAE Beijing	19
EAG 2022	51
Empex	23
ETF	37
Gosetto	37
Huss	17
Intamin	15
Jinma Rides	IBC
Mack Rides	5+7
Old Sydney Town Tourism Precinct	11
Polin	IFC
Seasonal Entertainment Resource	53
Vekoma	13
Zamperla	OBC

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